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Jordan

THE WESTERN HOME.

SCENES AT HOME:

OR, THE

ADVENTURES OF A FIRE-SCREEN.

~~~~~  
BY MRS. ANNA BACHE.  
~~~~~

“My eyes make pictures when they are shut.”—COLERIDGE.

PHILADELPHIA:

JAMES K. SIMON.

1851.

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TO
THE YOUNG LADIES
OF THIS COUNTRY
THIS LITTLE BOOK
IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED
BY THE
PUBLISHER.

THE HISTORY OF

THE

REIGN OF

1688

1689

INTRODUCTION.

Most people have heard of the "Grand Reservoir of Somewhere," in which all lost, mislaid, and worn-out articles are said to be carefully deposited. In this reservoir are to be seen piles of unfellowed gloves, rows of dropped snuff-boxes, dozens of lost pocket-handkerchiefs, and grosses of mislaid penknives. Silver and gold pencil-cases are there in abundance; jewelry glitters in caskets, crowds of borrowed umbrellas lean in the corners, and libraries of lent volumes cumber the shelves. Here departed fashions leave their legacies; gowns in which our grandmothers made conquests, and coats in which our

grandfathers made love. To this treasury does the tasteful disposer of drawing-room decorations consign her antiquated card-baskets, her dusty shell work, her cracked vases, and her tarnished annuals.

From this store-house was extracted the faded FIRE-SCREEN whose history is now given to the world. When it was discovered, why it was selected, how it contrived to relate its adventures, and why the language of Fire-screens was rendered into English, "it boots not now to tell."

A. B.

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SCENES AT HOME.

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN

SCENES AT HOME;

OR,

ADVENTURES OF A FIRE-SCREEN.

MARY AND HER FATHER.

~~~~~  
There the pale artist plies the sickly trade.—GOLDSMITH.  
~~~~~

THE FIRE-SCREEN RELATES ITS OWN HISTORY.

WHEN I first became conscious of existence, I found myself in a small room, dimly lighted by an autumnal sunset. The once white walls were of a brownish yellow, the little ten-plate stove looked battered and rusty, but the uncarpeted floor was clean, and the furniture though coarse and scanty, was neatly arranged. Beside the stove sat a feeble-looking old man, who occasionally fed the fire with chips from a broken basket. I lay on a large pine table in the middle of the room, with several gay companions formed like myself. Drawing materials, gold and tinted papers, artificial flowers,

strings of beads, and delicate shells covered the table; and near me sat a pale girl, whose unhealthy looks and faded attire, contrasted strangely with the elegance of her employment, and the glitter of the expensive toys which lay before her. She was sewing tassel on a rich bead bag, and her hands trembled as she worked.

“Mary, my dear,” said the old man, at length, “do stop now, and eat your supper. I am sure you need it, for you have not eaten any thing since breakfast.”

“Presently, father; I must finish this before I stop.”

The old man arose slowly and with some difficulty from his seat. I now perceived that the arm-chair in which he sat, was provided with a patch-work cushion; an old rug was thrown over the back of it, and a little mat lay on the floor before it. The old man drew from a corner of the room a small round stand, took out of a cupboard two cups and saucers, and two plates, which he placed upon it, and then

lifting a calico curtain which hung before a small recess, he displayed a few sticks of wood, one of which he placed in the stove.

“I have done now,” said Mary, rising and placing her work on the table. She turned to the stove, took from it a small black earthenware tea-pot, cut a few slices from a loaf of rye bread, and sat down with her father to their frugal meal. The old man bent his gray head, and reverently asked a blessing on the food, before they tasted it.

“How much are you to get for the fire-screens and bag, Mary?” inquired the old man.

“I do not know, father. Fancy-work is less profitable than it used to be, now that the ladies have so many fairs. The things they cannot sell are put in stores, and the market is overstocked. But as these screens are made to order, I shall get something more than I did for the last.”

“Aye, Mary, my daughter, the ladies who get up these fairs, sit by bright fires, in hand-

some parlours, while they make their toys. They work when they please, and quit when they please; they sit down to good dinners, and sleep in warm beds; and they think little, and care little, about those who must work whether they like it or not; who cannot stop when their heads ache, or their hearts ache; who must work with cold hands and hungry stomachs, before they can be warmed and fed."

"They mean to do good, father."

"Yes, Mary, but they give as alms what should be paid as debt. It is the duty of the rich to help the poor, and I believe there are few who would rather be beggars than labourers. While these ladies are collecting money at their fairs, they are robbing one class of the industrious poor of their rights, that they may give to another class in charity. The rich best help the poor, when they give them plenty of work, and pay them a good price for it."

"Then if ladies who encourage fairs, would

employ us to make the things, and pay us a fair price for them at first, it would not be wrong to get up fairs, and sell those things afterwards, for as much as people choose to give—would it, father?"

"I think not, Mary. Fairs might be made doubly useful in that way. But, as I heard Mathew Carey say once, 'It takes a great deal of judgment to know how to do good.'"

"It does indeed, father. I wish some of those charitable ladies thought of that."

There was a pause. Their meal was finished. Mary quickly washed up the tea-things, and set them by, then placing me and my companions in a little basket, she held up the bag to her father.

"Is it not pretty, father?"

"Yes; Mary dear, but it is hard to see you forced to toil your pretty eyes out over these things for a morsel of bread. Little did I think, when I paid for your schooling, that it was to be put to such a use."

"Dear father," said Mary, throwing her arm

round the old man's neck, "what better use could it be put to, than earning honest bread for us both?"

"God bless you, Mary," said he, returning her embrace, while tears rolled down his wrinkled cheeks—"God *will* bless you, for you are a dutiful child."

"He *does* bless me"—said Mary, looking fondly at her father, while her eyes brightened, and a lovely glow suffused her pale cheeks. "He does bless me, for He enables me to help and comfort you. But I must go," she continued, recollecting herself, "it is quite dark; however it is not far to Mrs. Hart's. I wish —" tying her bonnet, and putting on her cloak as she spoke; "I wish I were going to Mrs. Hudson's. She always has a kind word and look, no matter how busy she is. Good-bye, father, for a little while. Stop—I'll reach you the Bible before I go." She set the little stand before the old man, placed a large book on it, trimmed the lamp, and put it beside the book; doing all these little servicee with the quick

movement of one who never wasted a moment, and never had a moment to waste. She then left the room and descended the stairs, singing in a low voice as she went,

“When darkness and when sorrows rose,
And press'd on every side ;
Did not the Lord sustain my steps,
And was not God my guide?”

The door closed behind her and I left the abode of virtuous poverty.

THE RICH MAN'S DAUGHTER.

How shocking must thy summons be, oh! Death!
To him that is at ease in his possessions.—BLAIR.

I REMAINED in the basket for some hours, and was at length released from my prison by an elderly lady, who, taking hold of my gilded handle turned me round and round, eyed me with apparent admiration, and placed me on a marble mantle-piece, near a beautiful China vase. She then left the room, and I took a survey of my new habitation, It was very unlike the humble abode I had quitted. The room was large and lofty, the furniture elegant and abundant, and gazing round on rich curtains and carpets, tasteful chairs, luxurious sofas, splendid mirrors, glittering lamps, and costly tables, laden with books, prints, and toys, I felt that I certainly was in very good society. As this was my

first appearance in *high life*, I might have been somewhat abashed had not a large mirror which hung opposite, enabled me to form a pretty accurate estimate of my own personal advantages, and I found myself well fitted to take my place in the brilliant circle to which I was admitted. I was elegantly shaped, and covered with embossed paper of a pale lilac hue, ornamented with wreaths of flowers, so finely painted, that they seemed to rival in beauty the delicate natives of the hot-house, which bloomed in my neighbour, the China vase. I was edged with gold, and my carved handle was covered with the same bright material. My Chinese neighbour was a traveller, and, with the ease of one who had seen the world, entered into conversation with me. From him I learned some particulars of the family, whose mansion we assisted to adorn.

“Mr. Walcott,” said the vase, “is a wealthy merchant. His family consists of a wife and one child; a beautiful daughter, just *brought out*.”

I inquired the meaning of the last phrase, feeling rather awkward as I confessed my ignorance; but my Chinese friend, being much too well-bred either to smile or sneer, quietly gave me the information I desired.

“There is a time,” said he, “in every young lady’s life, somewhere between her fifteenth and eighteenth years, at which her education is said to be *finished*. She is taken from school; the accomplishments which have been acquired, or are supposed to have been acquired, at the cost of much time and pains on the part of the damsel, and much money on the part of her parents, are to be exhibited to the world. Dress-makers, milliners, jewellers, and hair-dressers, are put into requisition; certain quantities of wines, jellies, cakes, ices, &c., are prepared; cards of invitation are issued to a large number of persons, requesting their presence at the house of the young lady’s parents. If more people assemble than the rooms will hold, so much the better. The young lady appears, elegantly dressed, her

drawings lie on the centre-table in a handsome port-folio, or placed in superb frames, ornament the walls. She plays on the piano-forte or harp; is asked to sing—to dance. She complies; her parents are complimented by the papas and mammas, and herself by the young men. She is now entitled to receive morning calls, go to evening parties, and frequent public amusements. Her party is returned by invitations to a multitude of others, and she floats gaily along the current of fashionable society. She is now *brought out*, and supposed to be fit to undertake the duties of wife and mother, whenever an eligible match shall offer."

I thanked the vase for his information, though I could not understand how a series of morning calls and evening parties, should prepare a young women for the discharge of conjugal and maternal duties. I was proceeding to ask other questions, when the door was thrown open with some violence, and several young people entered the room, laughing and talking with great vivacity. The

handsomest of the ladies did the honours of the apartment, and I conjectured her to be the daughter of Mr. Walcott. The party dispersed about the room, and Miss Walcott threw herself on a sofa near the fire. An elegant-looking young man placed himself beside her, with a book of prints in his hand, which they began to look over. They talked at intervals, and presently the heat of the anthracite coal appeared to overcome Miss Walcott, for she reached out her hand, took me down from my station, and held me before her face. I wondered, however, why I was oftener held between her and her companion, or between her and the rest of the company, than between her and the fire. Sometimes she examined my shape very intently, and sometimes used me as a fan. Then she sat upright, pressing my gilded edge against her rosy mouth, and looking down at the book of engravings. At last she said, "It is really too warm here;" and attempted to rise.

“One word, dearest Fanny!” whispered the gentleman.

Fanny did not speak, but she held me up before her face, and lifted her bright tearful eyes to his. I suppose he was satisfied—at least he looked so.

That night it was known in the family that Mr. Raymond and Miss Walcott were *engaged*.

Time sped on. Preparations were made for Fanny's marriage, mean time she partook freely of all the gaieties of a fashionable winter. Raymond, as gay and thoughtless as herself, never wearied of attending his beautiful betrothed. Many books lay about the parlour, but I never could detect one bearing any resemblance to the large, time-worn volume I had seen Mary place so reverently before her father. Perhaps, so unwieldy and old-fashioned a book was not deemed a fit companion for the elegant volumes I now and then saw Miss Walcott look through. At any rate, I do not recollect that I ever even heard it mentioned. On Sundays, when the weather was

very fine, and Mr. Walcott had not a dinner-party, Mrs. and Miss Walcott sometimes came in with richly bound books, lettered "Prayer," in their hands; but I never saw these books opened.

The day appointed for the marriage drew near, when I missed Fanny from the parlour, and heard Mrs. Walcott tell her visitors that Miss Walcott had taken a violent cold, and was indisposed. The next morning, a pleasant-looking old lady, whom I had never seen before, came into the parlour with Mrs. Walcott.

"We arrived only last night," said she, "but hearing that dear Fanny was ill, I came down immediately."

"She will be very glad to see you," replied Mrs. Walcott; "but, my dear sister, let me beg of you not to teaze the poor girl with talk about religion, and so on; you know what I mean. Her spirits are low, and her nerves very irritable."

The lady sighed, and shook her head, but said nothing. Mrs. Walcott walked to the

fire-place, took me down, and seated herself. A servant entered to say that Miss Walcott was awake, and would be glad to see Mrs. Deane. The ladies arose and went up stairs; Mrs. Walcott still carrying me in her hand. The chamber to which I was introduced, was as spacious and luxuriously fitted up as the parlour I had left. Seated in an easy chair by the fire, was Miss Walcott. She looked brilliantly beautiful; her colour was higher and her eyes brighter, than I had ever seen them, and her simple white wrapper allowed the gaze to rest with undivided interest on the wearer. But there was something unnatural and fearful in her beauty, and her voice sounded as though she spoke painfully. A gentleman dressed in black sat beside her, holding her hand, and keeping his finger on her wrist.

“Dear aunt!” she exclaimed, stretching out her disengaged hand, “how glad I am to see you! Come sit by me—quite close, aunt. How long is it since you came back? Have you brought me any New York fashions? Is

it not provoking that I should be taken ill just now? I have missed Julia Clark's wedding-party, and Mrs. Philipson's ball, already; and Mrs. Stanwood gives a party next week. They say it will be the most splendid thing that ever was given in Philadelphia. Dear Doctor," turning to the gentleman, "you *must* make me well by Thursday next."

The Doctor smiled, and expressed his hope that Miss Walcott would be quite well before that time. Then he arose, and talked a little with Mrs. Walcott at a window. I distinguished the words, "perfectly quiet;" "some inflammation;" "nervous system;" &c. &c.: then bowing to Mrs. Deane, and bidding his fair patient good morning, he retired, accompanied by Mrs. Walcott.

Mrs. Deane drew close to the invalid, and took her hand affectionately. "Oh! now dear auntie," exclaimed Fanny, "I know what you are going to say. Pray don't talk to me now about death, and eternity, and such gloomy things. I am dull enough already, shut up here"

—and the Doctor wo'n't allow people to come up and enliven me. I'm sure there's not much the matter with me, after all—but—" a violent cough forbade the conclusion of the sentence.

"My dear niece," said Mrs. Deane, gently, "I hope indeed that your sickness is not unto death; but if you recover *now*, do you think you will live the less happily for knowing how to die?"

Fanny pouted her lip, but her love for her aunt, and her natural sweetness of temper, conquered the rising irritation.

"I do not know, indeed, aunt," said she, frankly, "for I have never thought about the matter."

"Then, my love, while your indisposition allows you leisure, had you not better give the subject a little consideration?"

"I don't know how to set about it," answered Fanny, half laughing.

Mrs. Deane sighed. "Well, my darling, I will not tease you with any more questions at present; only, while you sit here alone and

unemployed, look over this—” and she took a small book from a bag which hung on her arm, and placed it on her niece’s lap. “It will teach you *how to set about it.*” Then kissing Fanny’s forehead, she bade her good morning, and departed.

Left alone, Fanny took up the book. “The Bible! the Bible!” said she, peevishly. “I wonder aunt Deane did not send for a minister to pray for me. One would think I was at the last gasp. After all, suppose I *was* to die, how should I fare? I have not done any harm that I know of. Aunt Deane is always talking about pleasing God. I do not know that I have ever done any thing to displease him. But I do not want to die.” She paused, and began to turn over the leaves of the Bible. Presently her attention seemed engaged, and an air of earnest seriousness overspread her beautiful features.

She had been reading about half an hour, when the door was softly opened, and a blooming face appeared in the aperture. “May I

come in?" said the intruder, playfully; and without waiting for permission, she closed the door, ran up to Fanny, and embraced her. "They told me below that you were too ill to see any body; but I knew the prohibition did not extend to me, so I stole up without leave, for I was determined to see you."

"Oh! my dear Dora," exclaimed Fanny, dropping her book. I am so glad you came up, for I am quite melancholy. Aunt Deane has been here, and I do believe she thinks I am going to die."

"Going to die! nonsense. You never looked better in your life. There, is that a dying face?" and the young lady snatched a mirror from the toilet and held it before her friend. Fanny contemplated her fever-brightened face with a smile, and Dora, putting down the mirror, went on. "Well, my dear Fanny, I have come to spend a quiet hour with you, and look over your bridal finery. I called at Thibaults' this morning, and saw Raymond looking at some splendid sets of

pearl. I guessed their destination. Have you bought your veil, yet?"

Fanny's maid was summoned. Drawers, wardrobes, and bandboxes, yielded up their gay contents; the Bible dropped unnoticed on the floor, and the young ladies spent two hours in animated discussions on white satin, lace veils, pelerines, collars, sleeves, skirts, &c. &c. &c., until Mrs. Walcott coming up, expressed great vexation at Fanny's neglect of the Doctor's injunctions; ordered the maid to assist her into bed immediately, and requested Miss Dora to walk down stairs.

When the doctor called in the evening he declared Fanny to be much worse, and bled her copiously. In the night, Mrs. Walcott was called up; Fanny was delirious, and the Doctor was sent for again. For two days the miserable parents watched the sick bed of their only child. Raymond never left her, and Mrs. Deane, who had been sent for as soon as the case was declared alarming, attended her with untiring care. She watched anxiously for a

moment in which she might speak to the dying girl of her Saviour, but when Fanny did not rave, she lay in a stupor, and Mrs. Deane could only put up mental supplications in her behalf.

About noon on the third day, Fanny awoke from an uneasy slumber, and stared feebly around her. Her father stood at the foot of the bed, his arms folded, his lips compressed, and his eyes fixed on his daughter. Her mother leaned weeping against the bed-post. Raymond knelt beside the bed, holding one of her hands. Mrs. Deane bent over her, and raised her head.

“Fanny, dear,” said she.

Fanny glanced at her aunt, then at her parents and her lover. Her eyes returned to her aunt. “Aunt,” said she, in a low, hollow tone, “I am going to die.”

“Yes, dear Fanny, but Jesus Christ is willing to receive you. Are not you willing to be saved by Him ?”

“I do not know that I am,” murmured Fanny, in that same unnaturally quiet tone.

“But don't you believe in Him, dearest Fanny?”

“I do not know that I do.”

“But will not you strive to go to Him?”

“I do not know the way.”

There was a faint gasp—a slight spasm—and the spirit departed to traverse *without a guide*, the Valley of the Shadow of Death.

Mrs. Deane gently laid back the fair head on its pillow, and closed the eyes. Mrs. Walcott gave a loud scream, and sunk on the floor in strong hysterics. Raymond still knelt beside the bed, holding the lifeless hand, and groaning in irrepressible agony. Mrs. Deane assisted in conveying the poor mother to her own room, and having directed the attendants what to do, she returned to the chamber of death. Mr. Walcott still stood in his former attitude, gazing fixedly on the body. Mrs. Deane approached him, put her hand on his arm, and whispered, , “My dear brother.”

He neither moved nor spoke.

“Dear brother,” she resumed after a short pause, “come with me.”

He shook off her hand impatiently, and resumed his former position.

“You are sorely tried; but oh! dearest brother, God can sustain you. Look to his mercy.”

“Away!” he shouted. “Look there, and then talk to me of *God's mercy*, if you dare. My child; my daughter; my darling! I toiled for her; I strove for her; I lived for her; and she lies *there*.”

Rage, more than grief, seemed to convulse the miserable man. His face grew livid, while foam gathered on his lips, he uttered some inarticulate murmurs, and fell down in an apoplectic fit.

The father and daughter were buried on the same day.

THE LYNN FAMILY.

~~~~~  
Domestic Peace! to thy white hand is given  
Of earthly *happiness* the golden key.—*Gems from the Antique.*  
~~~~~

WHEN poor Fanny's chamber was arrayed for the funeral, I was placed in a drawer, where I remained for some time. At length, I was taken out, wrapped in paper, and carried away. When my envelope was removed, I found myself in the hands of a lady, who after allowing two pretty children to look at me, placed me, as usual, on the mantel-piece.

My new abode was a parlour, plainly furnished, but arranged with the most perfect neatness. A cheerful fire burned in the grate; the table was set for tea. The two children, a boy of seven, and a girl about four years old, were playing on the carpet; a pretty girl of ten, sat on a low chair beside a cradle, in which slept a beautiful baby. The girl rocked

the cradle with one hand, and held in the other a book, which she read very attentively. The lady placed a small basket of cakes on the tea-table, then she took from it a lamp, and putting it on a small stand near the cradle, said to the absorbed reader, "My love, you should not read so far from the light."

"I know it mamma, but I did not think about the light just then. I was on the mountain with Ruth Lee," holding up her book. Her mother smiled, but the smile was followed by a sigh, and opening her work-box, she sat down beside the stand.

"A'n't you well, dear mamma?" said the reader, looking anxiously at her mother.

"Yes, darling; quite well."

"Then why do you sigh so, mamma, and look so grave? Is any thing the matter?"

"Nothing is the matter with me Emma; but I have just been to bid poor Mrs. Walcott good-bye."

"Poor Mrs. Walcott!—oh, yes! I recollect the day Fanny Walcott called on you. She

was so pretty and good-natured. How she kissed the baby, and played with George and Harriet. Tell me what you saw to-day, mamma.

“I saw a sad sight, Emma. Mrs. Walcott was very ill after the deaths of her husband and child. She has recovered, and is going with a party of fashionable friends to Europe. She says she cannot bear the place where she lost her husband and daughter: so the elegant house and furniture are to be sold. She gave me that beautiful screen for a keepsake. She says she hopes that new company and new scenes, will make her forget her troubles.”

“But, mamma, what are people to do who have troubles, and can't afford to go to new company and new scenes?”

“Don't you know, Emma?”

“I think I do, mamma;” and the little girl spoke very seriously. “Jesus says, ‘Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.’”

“Mrs. Walcott will not go to Jesus, Emma. She will not look for comfort where it may be

found, and she is restless and miserable. One minute she is giving orders for new dresses, and the next, crying over her daughter's picture, and wishing she was dead too."

"Was Mr. Walcott pious, mamma?"

"No, my dear. He thought of nothing but making money. He used to boast that his daughter was the prettiest, and he would make her the richest girl in Philadelphia. When his ships made good voyages, he used to tell her how much he had gained on the cargoes, and say, "It is all for you, Fanny." His finest ship was named after her, and while he would refuse a cent to a starving family, he would give poor Fanny thousands to squander on trifles."

"She was his *idol*, mamma."

"Yes, Emma; and when that idol was thrown down, the poor father's life and reason went with it."

Mrs. Lynn paused, and wiped away a tear. Emma's eyes were overflowing, and she hid them in her mother's lap.

The street-door bell rang. "Papa! papa!" shouted the children. Emma hastened to let her father in, and the little ones ran after her. Mr. Lynn entered with a smiling face, and and Mrs. Lynn's grave aspect brightened when she saw her beloved husband. The baby, waked by the gleeful bustle, was taken up by his father. Mrs. Lynn put the tea on the table, and Emma placed the chairs.

Mr. Lynn was head-clerk to a very wealthy merchant. Mr. and Mrs. Lynn were well-born and well-bred, but their circumstances were below their tastes and education, and they wisely conformed to them. They rented a small house in a retired street, kept but one domestic, visited seldom, and saw little company. Mrs. Lynn educated her children at home, and as she made her own clothes and theirs, besides assisting in household business, the fashionable goblin Ennui, never found her at leisure to receive him. As their limited income obliged them to live with exact economy, the funds for the charity they loved to

exercise, could be supplied only by self-denial. Many instances of this kind it was my pleasant lot to witness, during my abode in this happy family.

The winter was half over, when Mrs. Lynn sat down one morning in the parlour, and began to take the trimming off her straw bonnet. While she was doing this, Mrs. Freeman came in. When she had rested a little, she cast her eyes on Mrs. Lynn's bonnet.

"What are you going to do with your bonnet, Harriet?"

"I was caught in a storm yesterday, which drenched my ribands, and has made it absolutely necessary that my bonnet should be pressed and new-trimmed. I can do it myself, and I must make this bonnet last me all winter."

"You wore it all last summer, Harriet?"

"I did," answered Mrs. Lynn.

"And all this winter I think?"

"Even so," said Mrs. Lynn, smiling. "I cannot afford a new bonnet until next summer, if I live so long."

“James Lynn has a good wife,” said Mrs. Freeman, affectionately returning Mrs. Lynn’s smile, “but since I find you *making it do*, as Mrs. Sedgwick says, I am afraid my errand will come to little speed.”

“What is your errand, my dear madam?”

Mrs. Freeman was past sixty. She had been beautiful, and still retained traces of her youthful loveliness in her smooth fair skin; and delicate hands and feet. Those hands, though weakened by age, were ever stretched forth to the needy; and those feet were never weary of going about to do good. She had little money to bestow, but she had time, activity, good-will, and good sense; and all these she employed right heartily in the service of her fellow-creatures. To those who were ready to give money, food, or clothing, but were unable or unwilling to give time, Mrs. Freeman was a wise and willing almoner. She visited familiarly the dwellings of the poor; ascertained the nature and extent of their wants, and listened patiently to their com-

plaints. She watched and prayed with the sick, prepared their food, and administered their medicines. She taught ignorant wives how best to economize their scanty stores, and helped overburdened mothers to cut out and make up the clothing she procured for them. And on Sundays, the group of little faces, brightening when she entered the Sabbath-school, told of her usefulness there. "*Silver and gold have I none,*" said the Apostle, "*but such as I have give I thee.*"

And the gift was blessed.

Mrs. Freeman explained that she had been to see a poor family, and was requested to visit the lodgers in the room above them. She found a husband and wife in a state of dreadful destitution. The man lay ill of a rheumatic fever, and the woman, by working long at her needle in a smokey room, and by a dim light, had ruined her eyes, and was now scarcely able to see her way about their wretched chamber. A straw-pallet on the floor was their bed; a single thin counterpane their covering, All

the rest of their bedding had been pledged or sold, to keep them from starving. They had neither food nor fuel, and hardly clothes to cover them.

“I sent them some provisions, and a quarter dollar’s worth of wood, from a neighbouring shop,” continued Mrs. Freeman, “to supply their immediate wants. Mrs. Holbert and Miss Ward will give them some clothing; Mrs. Duncan has sent them a warm comfortable, and Dr. Barnes will attend them. I am now trying to collect money to buy them half a cord of wood. Can you assist me?”

Mrs. Lynn took out her purse and counted its contents.

“I am afraid I have nothing to spare to day,” said she thoughtfully. “We do not receive any money until the end of this month, and after we have paid our quarter’s rent, (which is due to-morrow,) I shall have barely enough for house-keeping expenses. I wish” —her eye fell on the bonnet; she paused, counted her money again, and took from the sum

half a dollar, which she presented to Mrs Freeman.

“Now tell me, candidly, Harriet; how have you contrived to spare this half dollar?”

“Why,” said Mrs. Lynn, smiling and slightly blushing, “you know it is necessary for me to calculate my resources, even to a cent. I had allowed a dollar and a half to buy lining and trimming for my bonnet. I can make a smaller quantity of riband do, and the half dollar saved will help to buy the wood.”

Little George, while shaping a bit of stick into a boat, listened attentively to this dialogue, and the lesson was not lost.

A few days afterward, while the family were at dinner, Mrs. Lynn said to her husband—“Did you call at Mrs. Pond’s to-day, about the place for Ellen?”

“I did, and Ellen went immediately. Poor Mrs. Pond was very low-spirited. Her husband is still out of employ; she has had no needlework to do since the last Mrs. Freeman sent her; and Christopher, who earned a little

by going on errands, has taken such a violent cold that he can hardly sit up."

"How did he get such a cold, papa?" asked George.

"His shoes are worn out, my dear; he is not a hardy child, and the weather has been so wet and cold that he suffers severely. My love," (to Mrs. Lynn,) "have you no old shoes to spare?"

Mrs. Lynn shook her head. "I gave Emma's old shoes to black Polly, last week, and George's would not be large enough."

"Papa," said the little boy, as they arose from the table, "you know you promised me a pair of skates, if I did not miss my lessons for a month."

"I did, George."

"Papa, I have earned the skates; hav'n't I, mamma?"

"Yes, darling; you have said your lessons perfectly during the last month."

"Papa, will a pair of thick shoes cost more than a pair of skates?"

“Not quite so much as a very good pair.”

“Well, then, papa, if you will take the money my skates would cost, and buy poor Christy a pair of shoes, I will go without the skates.”

“Very well, my son; but you had better not decide too quickly. I shall not be able to afford you a pair of skates this winter, if I buy the shoes for Christy. I am going to be busy for half an hour; take that time to think, and make up your mind.”

With a very important face, George sat down by the window to think. Visions of skates with bright steel runners, painted woods, and stout straps, floated before him. He thought of merry parties on the brick-pond, and he dwelt much on the triumph of displaying his handsome new skates before a certain Bill Mackey, whose fine skates and disobliging temper, had given some offence to little George. “It would be so pleasant on the brick-pond, and Fred. Clarke will be so glad, and my skates will be nicer than Bill Mackey’s, for the red

paint is worn off his, now. And it is growing so cold—the streets are covered with sleet—it will be such grand skating to-morrow.” George hesitated. He felt as if he *could not* give up the skates. He looked out of the window—a half-clad shivering child was shuffling along the pavement, dragging a basket of chips, and his red, swollen feet were visible through his torn and and mud-soaked shoes, “Poor Christopher! do his feet look so?”

Mr. Lynn closed his book. “Well, George.”

“Papa, I have chosen. Buy the shoes for Christy.”

“What! will you dive up doin on the brit-pond?” inquired little Harriet, who had been the confidant of her brother’s glorious anticipations.

George’s throat swelled, but he answered manfully—“Harriet, poor Christy is barefoot. I can do better without skates than he can without shoes. Say, papa, will you?”

“Surely, my dear boy,” said his father, em-

bracing him, "and bless God for putting the thought into your young heart.

The shoes were bought that evening, and the happy little George was permitted to carry them to Christopher.

"Mamma, what is *sensibility*?"

"That, Emma, is one of the questions more easily asked than answered. What do you think it is?"

"I thought it meant feeling so sorry for other people's pain or grief, that you wanted to do any thing in the world for them."

"A very good definition"—began Mrs. Lynn, but Mr. Lynn interrupted her—"Of your mother's sensibility, hey, Emma?"

"Yes, papa: just that—because I once heard Mrs. Freeman tell Mr. West, that mamma was a woman of *real* sensibility. But there are *two* kinds of sensibility, papa."

"What makes you think so?"

“ Why, mamam, you know the afternoon I spent with Mary Earle. Mrs. Earle wanted to send a message to Mrs. Dunbar, so she wrote a note, and Mary asked her mother to let us take it. So we went, and Mrs. Dunbar was sitting in the parlour with another lady, and she asked us to sit down while she answered the note. While she was writing, the nurse came in, and said—‘Ma’am, the Doctor says Robert must be bled; and he is crying for you. He says he wouldn’t mind it if he might sit in your lap.’ ‘Oh! nurse,’ said Mrs. Dunbar, ‘I can’t think of coming. I never could bear the sight of blood. I should faint away in a minute. Tell Robert to let you hold him, nurse, and be a brave boy and he shall have a rocking-horse when he gets well.’ So the nurse went away looking quite vexed, and Mrs. Dunbar turned to the other lady, and put her handkerchief to her eyes and said, ‘I never could bear to see the poor dear boy bled. I should be quite ill.’

“ Oh! my dear creature,’ said the other lady, ‘you have so much sensibility.’”

“Selfish, unfeeling woman !” exclaimed Mr. Lynn.

“ I thought it was queer, papa ; for when George and Harriet had the measles, mamma scarcely left them night or day, she held them on her lap, sung to them, told them stories and gave them all their food and physic herself. And when Betsy had such a bad hand, mamma dressed it every day. I know she did not like to do such things, for once after the hand was dressed she nearly fainted ; and Maria said, “Why don’t you let somebody else do that for Betsy, if it makes you so sick ?” And mamma said—I remember it so well !—“ How can I ask another to do that which *I* shrink from doing ? ”

“ That was like your mother. Emma, I *hope* you will resemble her.”

“ I’ll try, papa. But about sensibility. —What kind of sensibility was that, when Mrs. Dunbar would not go to her sick child ? ”

“ My dear girl, sensibility, like current coin, is often counterfeited. As you grow older, I

hope you will learn to distinguish them, 'for the tree is known by its fruit.' But let us go back to your definition of sensibility. That pity for another's pain, which makes us wish to relieve it."

"Yes, papa."

"St. James will tell you, 'If a brother or sister be naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not these things which are needful to the body, what doth it profit?'"

"Well, papa?"

"Try sensibility by that test, Emma. If what you feel for another's sufferings, does not only make you *wish*, but *strive* to relieve it, call the feeling by what name you please, its real one is *selfishness*. I remember two little anecdotes," continued Mr. Lynn. - "A gentleman, one bleak day, saw a poor sickly-looking woman, weeding in a garden. A thin, pale child, about nine years old, half clothed, and blue with cold, stood with her arms wrapped

in her apron, looking sorrowfully at the weeder. The gentleman asked the gardener some questions, and found that the weeder was the girl's mother. The woman had been ill, and was still unable to do much work. 'And the child is so fond of her mother, and so sorry for her, sir,' said the gardener, 'that no matter what the weather is, she stands all day by her mother's side, just as you see her now.'"

"That was *foolish* sensibility, papa. She had better have tried to help her mother, I think."

"True. This child's feelings were sincere, indeed, but they were not properly exercised, therefore they were useless. *Worse* than useless; for by standing inactive on the damp ground, she probably took cold, fell ill, and added to her mother's troubles."

"The other story, papa."

"Two little girls saw a poor boy collecting dry sticks. They learned that he was weak and hungry, and would be beaten if he went home without a large bundle of sticks. They

gave him their breakfast; and while he ate at it gathered sticks for him."

That was *wise* sensibility, papa; they not only pitied the poor boy, but helped him. And Ruth had more sensibility than Orpah, papa, for 'Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clave unto her.'"

"And remember, Emma, that kind actions double their worth when performed in a pleasant manner; for

'With ill grace conferr'd,
Crowns, to a feeling mind, less joy impart,
Than trifles, offered by a willing heart.'

Mrs. Lynn unlocked her book-case and took from the upper shelf a small, thick, black-looking volume, which she gave to Emma.

"What an odd-looking book! '*Dramatic Dialogues.*' Oh! that's nice; what frightful pictures. Where did it come from, mamma?"

"That book was the delight of my childhood, Emma, when books for children were not so plentiful as they are now. I have kept it carefully, for I believe another copy could scarcely be found in America."

— “ May I read it all ? ”

“ Not at present. One of the Dialogues is called, ‘ *False and True Sensibility.* ’ It gave me my first accurate ideas on the subject. You may read that.”

“ But the first dialogue, mamma—‘ *Laura, or the Little Idler.* ’ Look at her bureau, with all the drawers open, and the things hanging out. May I read that ? ”

“ You may, Emma,” replied her mother, archly, “ if you know any little girl whose drawers are kept like Laura’s.”

“ Oh ! mamma,” said Emma, laughingly, “ now that is not fair. I have never left my things about, since you made me learn ‘ *Slovenly Flora.* ’ ”

“ Tell me dat tory,” said little Harriet.

“ Jump in my lap, Harrie, and I will.”

SLOVENLY FLORA.

Little Flora, though really a beautiful child,
Was always disgusting to see ;
Her hands were so dirty, her apron so soil’d,
Her pretty black curls so entangled and wild,
No scullion more filthy than she.

In vain her kind mother endeavoured to train
Her daughter to habits more nice ;
She would listen and promise ; but in half a day,
From her heedless young mind would alike pass away,
Remonstrance, reproof, and advice.

One morning her brother came running up stairs—
“ Oh ! Mary, and Flora, and Sue ;
Come quick to the parlour, for uncle is there,
With beautiful pictures among us to share ;
But he says he has not many minutes to spare
And told me to hurry for you.”

So Mary and Susan, who always look'd neat,
At once to the parlour ran down ;
But Flora, as usual, in slovenly case,
Her hair all uncomb'd and all dirty her face,
And scarcely a hook to her gown ;

Must run to the nursery, and beg to be dressed
And hurry to scrub her hands clean ;
But her combs were astray, and her shoe-strings untied,
And her frock to be mended—in vain Flora tried
To make herself fit to be seen.

At last she was ready, but long before that,
The pictures and uncle were gone ;
And uncle had made to each little niece,
A present of two little pictures apiece ;
But *slovenly* Flora got none.

“ And now get down, Harrie, dear, for I
must go and study my Sunday-school lesson.

Mr. and Mrs. Lynn observed the utmost

regularity in the distribution of their time, and enforced punctuality on every member of their household. The business of one day was never, except in case of unforeseen accident, allowed to encroach upon the next; consequently, all domestic duties were easily and thoroughly performed. They were as careful of other people's time as of their own. Mr. Lynn settled his bills at stated seasons; the bag of clothes was always ready when the washer-woman called for it; Betsy's wages were paid every Saturday morning; and if Mrs. Lynn, in her visits of charity, desired any poor person to call at her house for food, medicine, or clothing, the articles promised were always prepared at the appointed hour. Promises made to the children were rigidly kept, their little possessions never interfered with, and their play-time never, if it could be avoided, encroached upon. Thus they learned the value of truth, of social rights, and the distinction of property. They imitated the exactness of their parents, and deemed it disgraceful to

deliver a message incorrectly, or forget what they had planned to do at a certain time. In short, as a young lady visitor observed one day, "they lived more like the good people in a moral tale, than a real family."

They had some agreeable friends, with whom they exchanged social evening visits. The ladies brought their needle work; reading, conversation, and sometimes a little music, formed their amusements; a basket of fruit or a few cakes made by Mrs. Lynn, sufficed for refreshment. On these occasions, Emma was permitted to sit up till nine o'clock. Assisting her mother in attending to her guests, or seated with her little work-basket she listened, enjoyed and improved. I heard more wit and wisdom during one of these quiet evenings, than in all the months of my sojourn at Mr. Walcott's.

When the short winter day closed in, Mrs. Lynn liked to sit for an hour before tea, with no light except that of the fire. It was a season of rest to the parents, and delight to the

children, who called this time their *happy hour*. Sometimes Mr. Lynn played on the flute, while the children danced; sometimes he told them stories, or gave them riddles to guess; and not unfrequently, the whole party united in some juvenile sport. One evening, the father and children had had a hearty game at romps. When they were weary with jumping, and hoarse with laughing, Mr. Lynn threw himself on the sofa. Harriet scrambled up to sit beside him; Emma and George sat down before the sofa, and George's little dog, Prince, who had contributed his full quota of noise and merriment to the game, curled himself up on the carpet with his nose on his master's knee.

"How snug we are!" said Emma, after a little silence.

"Tell us a story, please, papa," said George.

"Tell you a story! You have not left me breath to tell one. Ask mamma, who sits there so demurely."

Immediately the merry sprites capered over to Mrs. Lynn, and preferred their petition.

“Tell us Xailoun the Idiot, if you please, mamma.”

“The Three Caskets, please, mamma.”

“No! no! please, mamma tittle Mary and her tat.”

“Tell us something we never heard before, mamma.”

Mrs. Lynn thought for a moment, and began.

“When I was about your age, Emma, my mother went out shopping one day, and took me with her. It was a bright, bitter morning in January, and though I was well wrapped up, I felt the cold severely. We stopped at the grocer’s, and the shoemaker’s, and then we went to a dry-goods store. The store-keeper knew my mother, and when we had bought what we wanted, she told us of a poor widow in the neighbourhood, who was in great distress. So my mother asked where Mrs. Marshall lived, and said she would go there directly. It was in a narrow alley, not far from the store; a mean, old, dirty, tumble-

down house, with a family in every room. Mrs. Marshall lived in the garret. When we went in, we found her in bed. She had very few bed-clothes, and there was no fire in the room. My mother talked to her, and found that she was sick with liver complaint, and had nothing to depend on but her daily labour. She had worked too hard the week before, and was not able to leave her bed. ‘I have neither money, victuals, nor fire-wood, ma’am, and I ain’t able to earn any, and what will become of that poor boy, God only knows’—and the poor woman cried.

“I looked around, and saw a very ragged, lean, little boy, about six years old, sitting on a stool at the foot of the bed, eating a crust of rye bread.

“‘Don’t cry, mamma,’ said the little boy, cheerfully? ‘when the ladies are gone, I’ll pray to God to help us.’

“My mother gave the child some money, and told him to go and buy a pound of coffee and a loaf of bread for his mother. When he

was gone, my mother said, 'Your little boy seems well instructed.' 'Yes, ma'am,' said Mrs. Marshall, 'I got him in the Infant School when he was two years old, and I have never kept him a day at home when he was able to go. It's a great comfort to me, lying here as I am, to hear him say Scripture texts and hymns. He never misses his prayers, night or morning. Oh! ma'am, I have reason to bless that Infant School. I never knew Johnny to tell a lie in his life; and he would not lay a finger on what was not his own, if he was starving.'

"By this time Johnny came back. My mother promised to send some wood and other comforts as soon as possible; and as we went down stairs, she stopped at one of the rooms, and engaged a woman to nurse Mrs. Marshall. My sisters and I worked very hard that day, to mend up some old clothes for Johnny and his mother; and my brother Charles begged leave to give Johnny a plaid cloak which he had outgrown. Poor fellow! he jumped for joy when he came for the

clothes, and Charles threw a cloak over his shoulders, and told him he might keep it.

“Mrs. Marshall was sometimes better and sometimes worse. She worked when she was able, and my mother and other ladies helped her, but she suffered a good deal. When Johnny was about nine years old, he went out one Saturday morning after breakfast, and did not come home till near noon. ‘Oh! Johnny,’ said Mrs. Marshall, ‘where have you been?’—‘Mother,’ said Johnny, ‘I am old enough to earn my own living. I don’t want to be a burden on you any longer, I’ve been to look for a place.’”

“‘And did you get one, Johnny?’ said Mrs. Marshall.

“‘Yes, mother, and the man I’m hired to will be here presently to speak to you about me.’”

“Mrs. Marshall asked him how he had managed. Johnny said he went and stood in the market, and looked at the farmers as they came in with their wagons, and when he

saw one that looked good-natured, he asked him if he wanted to hire a boy. At last he met with one that did.

“The farmer came, and agreed to take Johnny on a trial for a month, and if they were mutually satisfied, to have him bound till he was twenty-one years old. So Johnny went away with his master.”

“And did he stay there, mamma?” asked George.

“You shall hear. The day after the month was up, Johnny came home. He looked very serious, and said he was not going back again. His mother asked him if he had been ill-treated. No; they had been very kind, indeed.—Had he enough to eat and drink? Plenty of the best.—Was his work too hard? Nothing but what he could do very well.—Was his master satisfied? Yes, his master wanted him to stay. ‘Then why did you come away, Johnny?’ Johnny made no answer. Then his mother was frightened, ‘Oh! Johnny,’ said she, ‘I am afraid you have done

something wrong.' Johnny burst out crying. 'No, indeed, mother; I have done nothing wrong.' 'Then why won't you go back?' 'Mother,' said Johnny, wiping away his tears and looking very earnest, 'my master laughs at the Bible, and does not love the Lord Jesus Christ. I cannot live with a man that calls the Holy Bible a pack of lies. Mother, I won't be a burden on you. I'll get another place, but I can't live with people that don't love my Saviour.'

"Poor Mrs. Marshall kissed her dear little boy, and they had scarcely done crying, when the farmer came. He was very sorry to lose Johnny, for he said he was the best little boy he had ever employed. He offered to bring Johnny up as his own child (for he was a rich man,) if he would come back; but Johnny was firm. No offers would tempt him to cast in his lot with those who did not serve the Lord.*

* A fact. It happened almost word for word as Mrs. Lynn relates it.

“Johnny soon got another place, and this time it was in a pious family, for God leads those who trust in Him by ways they know not. His master loved him very much, for Johnny was a faithful Christian servant; and his wife dying soon after, he hired Mrs. Marshall for house-keeper. The country air and good living, soon restored her health; and she lived to see her little Johnny grow up a pious, sensible, useful man.”

“And what has become of him, mamma?”

“He has a large farm of his own, now; he is married, has a good wife, and six nice children. Do you remember the two fine turkeys, and the barrel of pippins, that were sent to your grandmother last Christmas?”

“Yes, surely, mamma. Was *that* Mr. Marshall, little Johnny?”

“Yes. He is now a wealthy, influential man, but he still remembers with gratitude those who befriended his childhood.”

“Papa is coming up the steps. I’ll run and open the front door,” said George.

“My dear husband, what is the matter? How pale you look!”

Mr. Lynn gave Emma his hat, and without speaking, sat down on the sofa. Mrs. Lynn, somewhat alarmed, seated herself beside him, and took his hand. Emma closed her work-box, and prepared to leave the parlour. ‘Don’t go, my Emma, your parents have no secrets from their children. Sit down beside papa, and I will tell you and mamma what has worried me. Mr. Bennett, you know, though a thorough man of business, is rather eccentric. He has been in and out of the counting-house lately, in a fidgety sort of a way, and has said several things which I have been puzzled to understand. This evening we left the counting-house together, and as we parted at the corner of the street, he said, with a very peculiar look, ‘Good-bye, Lynn. I’ve a notion your services as clerk won’t be called for much longer.’ I was too much surprised to speak, and before I

could recover myself, he had turned the corner and was gone."

"This is strange—did he speak angrily?"

"By no means; and odd as he is, I have never known him capricious or unjust. I know that I have done my duty by him. I cannot understand it."

"What do you mean to do?"

"Ask an explanation the first thing to-morrow. It may be that he intends to discharge me. If so, it cannot be helped."

"Your high character, my dear husband, will soon procure you another situation."

"Perhaps not, Harriet. Times are very hard just now. However, God's will be done!"

"Amen," fervently responded his wife. "We have health and strength; heads, hands, and hearts; we shall be able to make a living; never fear it. So long as I have you and my children," clasping his hand, and pressing it against her heart, "I can be happy any where."

"Dear papa," cried Emma, bursting into

tears, and clinging round her father's neck, "I will do all I can to help you and mamma."

Little Harriet, who had till now been standing beside her mother, with an exceedingly puzzled expression of countenance, comprehended just enough of what was said, to perceive that want of money had something to do with the painful agitation she witnessed. Running to the little box in which she kept her baby wealth, she took out a long-hoarded half dollar, and delightedly placed it in her father's hand. "Dere papa, oo sall have my half-dollar; oo sall have it *all*. Don't ky, Emma. Take it, papa."

"My precious children! my noble wife!" said Mr. Lynn. He embraced his children, and leaned his head on his wife's shoulder.

"Papa," said George, coming in with a letter in his hand, "Betsey told me to bring you this. She says a man just left it."

"Mr. Bennett's hand!" exclaimed Mr. Lynn, as he took the letter. Dreading he knew not what, he hastily opened it, glanced

over the contents, dropped it, and clasped his wife in his arms.

“Good news?” eagerly asked Mrs. Lynn, catching the altered expression of his face.

“My generous friend! Read, dearest Harriet, read.”

Mrs. Lynn read—

DEAR LYNN:—Your sudden change of countenance, as we parted to-day, has made me fear that in my desire to give you an agreeable surprise, I have trifled with your feelings. I could not sleep to-night if I thought your rest was disturbed, so I hasten to tell you that when I hinted that your services as *clerk* would not be required much longer, I meant you to understand that next week you become *my partner*. Your long, faithful, and most valuable services, have fully deserved this of me.

Your sincere friend,

JACOB BENNETT.

P. S.—My love to Mrs. L. and children.

The Lynns had too much good sense to make any material alteration in their mode of living, until they ascertained what they could prudently afford. They still inhabited their quiet dwelling, and occupied themselves in their daily duties. I did not so often see Mrs. Lynn busied in repairing her own and her children's garments: new books appeared more frequently on the tables, and she spared a little more time for reading.

"You have so few personal wants. Is there nothing you would like to have?" said her husband.

"Nothing, thank you. Since you bought me that copy of Crabbe, and those splendid illustrations of Scott, I really cannot *invent* a want."

"What can I do for you, then, my dear wife? I value these increased means chiefly for your sake."

Mrs. Lynn thanked her husband with an affectionate smile, and replied,

"If you think we can afford it, love, I should

like to double our donation to Mr. Allen's poor's purse: and Emma wishes very much to take lessons in drawing."

"I will send the money to Mr. Allen instantly, and see Mr. Smith this morning."

Blessed with such "temperate wishes, just desires," the Lynns could not but prosper. My sojourn in this happy family, however, drew to a close. Business of importance required Mr. Lynn's presence in England, and as he did not expect to return in less than a year, he resolved to take his wife and children with him. They sold their furniture, and in the hurry of packing and arranging, I was thrown into a drawer of the work-stand, and there I lay forgotten, until after the sale.

MRS. BROWN'S BOARDING-HOUSE.

~~~~~  
The thousand nameless ills,  
That one incessant struggle render life.—THOMSON.  
~~~~~

AT length the drawer was opened, and by the exclamation of the young person who took me out, I found that she had not been aware of my presence.

“Look mother what a beautiful fire-screen. I suppose it was left in the stand by mistake. Can we send it back?”

“I don't know where to send it child. I bought the stand at Lynn's sale. They are in England by this time, and I don't know any folks that know them.”

“Well, you made a cheap purchase mother. Only ten dollars for the stand, and a handsome screen beside. How it sets off the mantel-piece! Our rooms look right handsome; don't they?”

From the conversation which ensued, I learned that Mrs. Brown was a widow with four children brought to poverty by a bad husband, and that she was about to open a boarding-house. The parlour in which I was placed, with a handsome bed-chamber adjoining, were more expensively fitted up than the rest of the house, Mrs. Brown intending to let them at a higher price, to boarders who wished for a private parlour.

Mrs. Brown had been pretty, and was still pleasant to look upon, though her neat figure was somewhat bent by toil, and her features had acquired that peculiar sharpness, seldom seen but in those who have long combated with want and care. She was up early and down late, worked harder than her servants, and brought up her daughters to be as industrious and managing as herself.

Mrs. Brown had been established some weeks, and had obtained half a dozen boarders, but the two best rooms were not yet engaged. Poor Mrs. Brown! How often, day

after day, was she called from her household tasks to show those rooms ! to hear objections to the furniture, the situation, the price ; to answer impertinent questions about her hours, her table, her boarders ; to decline unreasonable proposals ; and once or twice, people absolutely engaged the rooms, and then sent word that they had changed their minds. I had once heard Mrs. Lynn say, " People who go shopping merely for amusement, when they do not purchase, should be compelled by law to pay something for the waste of time and patience they occasion." I thought it would not be a bad thing if keepers of boarding-houses were entitled to a similar remuneration.

" Keeping boarders," said Mrs. Brown, as she brought in a dust-pan and a brush, to take up sundry lumps of mud which two gentlemen had left on the carpet, " is just making one's house a thoroughfare."

At last a young lady looked at the rooms, asked a few necessary questions in a polite, pleasant manner, and engaged them. I under-

stood that herself and an invalid grandmother would occupy the apartments, and as the old lady's infirmities required constant attention, they should bring their own servant.

"If it be quite convenient Mrs. Brown, we shall come this evening." Mrs. Brown said it was quite convenient, and bidding a polite good-morning, the lady departed.

"That 's a real lady, mother," said Martha Brown as she returned from seeing the stranger down stairs.

"You may see that with half an eye, child ; but hurry now, get fires lighted in both rooms, and every thing to rights. Bless my life ! there 's one o'clock striking, and the custards not made yet." So saying, good Mrs. Brown bustled away, and left Martha to prepare for the reception of the ladies.

In the course of the afternoon, a book-case, a piano, and a sofa, were sent, and about eight in the evening, Miss Barton and her grandmother arrived. Mrs. Lorimer being much fatigued, went to bed immediately.

AGE AND YOUTH.

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So stands an aged Elm with Ivy bound—  
So youthful Ivy clasps an Elm around—PARNELL  
~~~~~

While I walk life's thorny road
Path of pain, by Jesus trod ;
Lead me from temptation's snare,
Be my shield where perils are !
And my thankful song shall be,
Gloria tibi, Domine !

When the weary race is past,
When the goal is reached at last ;
When sad heart and aching head ;
In the grave find peaceful bed ;
When the ransomed soul shall rise,
All exultant to the skies ;
Still my joyful song shall be,
Gloria tibi, Domine.

Miss Barton sang these words, accompanying herself on the piano. The door between the parlour and bed-room stood open, and at intervals, a sweet, though feeble voice within

the bed-room, joined in the song of praise. When Miss Barton had finished her hymn, she arose took up a Bible that lay on the table and went into the bed-room, closing the door after her.

Mrs. Lorimer's weakness obliged her to breakfast in bed. When up and dressed, she was assisted to the sofa, which she seldom quitted during the day. She was truly a majestic ruin. Aged, infirm, and sickly, but patient when suffering, thankfully cheerful when free from pain, the light of divine grace shone with such sweet lustre through her pale and faded features, the constant communings of her soul with Heaven imparted such benignant wisdom to her speech, that it was hard to say whether she was most loved or honoured. She had a large circle of pious and sensible friends, some of whom frequently spent the evening in her quiet parlour, when she was well enough to see company. Thus Miss Barton's mind and manners enjoyed all the advantages of mingling habitually in polished society. Mrs. Lorimer also had many

juvenile relations, and about three weeks after her arrival at Mrs. Brown's, one of her grandnieces came to stay under her care, during a temporary absence of her parents from Philadelphia.

A beautiful creature was Joanna Somers! Just thirteen, but without the angular awkwardness which generally accompanies that age; fair, fresh, rosy, and sparkling. High-spirited, generous, frank, and affectionate: conscious of her beauty, but with genius enough to value the charms of mind above those of person, Joanna was just the being to enchant a poet, perplex a philosopher, and make a Christian anxious. As a child she had been praised for her beauty, as a school-girl for her genius, and by her father's visitors, flattered for both, until she was more than half-spoiled. She was proud, violent, volatile, and idle. She loved her grand-aunt, and that perception of the beautiful, which is a characteristic of genius, made her admire, though she did not understand, Mrs. Lorimer's Christian

virtues. Nevertheless, she frequently tried the patience of the old lady to the utmost. Much has been said of the selfishness of age. It is nothing to the selfishness of youth.

A walking party had been arranged by some of Joanna's favourite companions, which she anticipated with eager impatience. But the appointed day arose dark and threatening, and before ten o'clock, torrents of rain put all walking out of the question.

Joanna opened and shut a dozen volumes, played half a waltz, unlocked her drawing-box, did ten stitches in her lace work, copied three lines of poetry, and began a letter to her mother. But the untamed wilfulness of her temper prevailed, and she gave way to a violent fit of ill-humour, exclaiming against the weather, and declaring that she was always disappointed in every thing she undertook.

"I am disappointed too," said Miss Barton, "for I had a very particular engagement this morning; but I am very comfortable, nevertheless."

Joanna curled her beautiful lip, and looked at Miss Barton with an air of scornful discontent, of which Miss Barton, who was sewing very busily, remained quite unconscious.

“I would not be such an oyster as you are, cousin Susan—I do not believe that you *can* feel.”

“Susan is in the habit of feeling so much for *others*, Joanna, that she forgets to feel for herself,” observed Mrs. Lorimer, gravely.

Joanna tossed her head, and walked to the window. “Oh! this horrid, horrid rain; I don’t know what on earth to do. I have no comfort in the world.”

By this time she had wrought herself into a fever of vexation, and her grand-aunt was seriously displeased with her folly.

“Joanna,” said she, taking off her spectacles, and laying them in the book she had been reading, for the young lady’s restlessness made it impossible for her to go on—“you remind me of a novel I once read.”

“A novel!” exclaimed Joanna. “Oh! aunt, did *you* ever read *novels*?”

“Oftener than was good for me, my dear.”

“Why, aunt, do you think it *wrong* to read novels?”

“To go into all the difficulties of that question, would require more time, patience, and wisdom, than either you or I can command; but one evil certainly attends novel-reading.”

“What is it, aunt?”

“In reading narrative, you are *amused without effort*. If you read narratives only, for any length of time, the mind, unused to exertion, grows unwilling, indeed, unable to make any. All reading which requires attention, becomes distasteful. Science is perplexing, and history dull. Valuable time is wasted, bad habits are acquired, *the mind stands still*. If the novel-reader at length finds courage to break her bonds, she must do it, like the opium-eater, at the expense of a long and painful struggle. I speak feelingly, Joanna; when I was a child, I had no one to direct my reading;

I wasted much of my time over idle and unprofitable books. When I became convinced that I was doing wrong, the weariness and disgust I experienced before I could compel my attention to more serious studies, were very, very, painful. Even now, so strong is the force of early habit, I prefer narrative to any other kind of reading."

"Papa says, novels are *mental drams*."

"Not a bad comparison, Joanna; but I should rather liken them to sweetmeats. Very pleasant and not unwholesome, eaten now and then in small quantities, but unfit for daily food."

"Then you don't disapprove of novels, aunt, just because they are *inventions*; like Miss Simmons, with her starched face, who says, 'I wonder, Mrs. Somers, you can allow Joanna to read novels, which are nothing but *lies*.'"

"Many well-meaning people take that view of novels, my dear; but I do not disapprove of narrative fictions, simply as *fictions*. Va-

luable truths are not less valuable when pleasantly told."

"No, indeed, aunt—

Example strikes, where precept fails,
And sermons are less read than tales."

Mrs. Lorimer smiled at Joanna's quotation, who continued—

"I am sure that's true. Miss Edgeworth's Moral Tales did me a great deal of good; and you know, aunt, we often take physic in preserves."

"Yes, Joanna; but sometimes the sweetmeat lessens the effect of the drug."

"Then you would advise me to give up novel-reading altogether, aunt?"

"I am afraid that would be requiring too great a sacrifice of *you*, Joanna, who have tasted the dangerous luxury. But if you feel equal to the effort, (Joanna erected her head, and looked equal to any thing;) I should say, read no more novels for some years to come, at least. At any rate, my dear child, let your indulgences of this kind be *very* rare; and read

no work of fiction, unless recommended by some one whose moral, as well as critical judgment, may be relied on."

"Thank you, aunt. I should not like to give up novels *altogether*, at least, till I have read all Walter Scott's. But I promise you that I will *try* to follow your advice. And now the story, if you please."

"It is of a shrewd, sensible girl, who had roughed through many wants and dangers. At last she became waiting-maid to a spoiled lady of quality. Her ladyship had every thing to make her happy but one."

"What was that, aunt?"

"Knowledge of her own blessings. She had never known suffering, and no one reminded her how bitterly others knew it. She lay on her sofa, day after day, devoured with *ennui*, and puzzling the doctor

'To name the nameless, ever new disease,'

She took no exercise, therefore she had no appetite; though her French cook excelled himself, she declared that she could get nothing fit

to eat. The frown of habitual discontent spoiled her pretty face—and she laid the blame on her milliner. If she rode, the carriage jolted her to death; if she thought of walking, it was sure to rain.”

Joanna smiled, and blushed a little.

“Her friends were tired out at last, and the burden of her weariness fell upon her waiting-maid. Poor Kitty did her best to please, to soothe, and to amuse, but in vain. She grew weary, too; and one day, in answer to her lady’s constantly repeated drawl of—‘Oh! Kitty, can you think of nothing that would do me good?’—Kitty replied, ‘Yes, my lady. I think I could cure you, if you would follow my advice.’

“‘What is it?’ said the lady.

“‘Let me go and buy two coarse gowns, my lady, and you and I will put them on. Then we will go and rent a garret in some by-street, and work for our living. I will take in washing, and you shall take in sewing, my lady. I will cook and scrub, and you shall

make the bed and sweep the room. We will have brown bread and bohea for breakfast'— 'Horrid!' ejaculated her ladyship,— 'and tripe or cow-heel for dinner, and we'll get up at daylight, and work hard all day, and may be have to sit up all night now and then, to earn enough to keep us, and after we have lived so for a month, we'll come home; and your ladyship will relish your chocolate and muffin, and your carriage will be easy, and your bed comfortable, and your very night-gown will seem an elegant dress.'

“‘Is the girl mad?’ exclaimed Lady Mary, actually raising herself on her elbow to look at Kitty. ‘Did any body ever live in such a dreadful way?’

“‘Oh! yes, my lady; hundreds and thousands live so, and hundreds and thousands more would *be glad* to live so. If you had seen the sight that I saw yesterday! A poor family in such distress—starving, my lady.’

“Lady Mary had not a bad disposition, nor did she want sense, though indulgence kept

her better nature torpid. ‘Starving!’ she said with a look of horror—‘why did not you tell me, Kitty?’”

“‘Your ladyship complained so much of your nerves, that I was afraid to disturb you.’”

“‘But when people are *starving*, Kitty.’ Tears came into her ladyship’s eyes, and her purse was already in her hand. Encouraged by these symptoms, Kitty persevered. ‘If your ladyship could only see them. It is not far. Your ladyship never saw any thing like it.’ Curiosity and pity were excited. It was delightful to feel an interest in *something*; quite a new sensation. Lady Mary looked out of the window, was positive she should take her death, the wind, was high, the day was cold, &c. &c. But at length the carriage was ordered, Lady Mary was well wrapped up, and attended by Kitty, she entered, for the first time, the dwelling of poverty.

“I cannot remember the particulars of their visit. Lady Mary witnessed a terrible scene of domestic distress; she gave relief freely,

and aided by Kitty's experience, gave it wisely. They departed laden with thanks and blessings.

“When they got home, Lady Mary thought her boudoir more elegant, and her sofa more comfortable, than they had ever been before. She ate her dinner with appetite, she looked on with interest while Kitty cut out the clothing they had bought for the poor family; and at last actually undertook to make a little cap. How she succeeded, the story does not relate; but many such visits were afterwards paid, to the great benefit of Lady Mary's health, and Kitty got a handsome new gown, as a fee for her successful prescription.

Having finished her story, Mrs. Lorimer got up, and leaning on her servant, went out of the room.

“I can bear to hear aunt Lorimer preach,” said Joanna, extending herself on the sofa her aunt had just quitted, “for she always practises what she preaches.”

“I wish *you* would practice what she

preaches," said Miss Barton good-humouredly, "for I am afraid I cannot finish this wrapper by dinner time."

"So I will!" exclaimed Joanna, jumping up.

"I know why you are in such a hurry; that wrapper is for old Mrs. Clark. I *will* help you; and cousin Susan," (the blush of ingenuous shame rose to her temples,) "I was rude and false when I said you was unfeeling. Will you forgive me?"

The cousins exchanged an affectionate kiss. Joanna went to work in good earnest. Susan exerted herself to entertain her volatile assistant, and the morning passed so rapidly, that Joanna started with surprise when the bell rang for dinner.

Mrs. Lorimer owned some western lands, which she wished to dispose of. A note came from her lawyer requesting her to send him a certain deed. Miss Barton searched every corner of her grandmother's writing desk, but

the required document was not to be found. Mrs. Lorimer gave Joanna a key directing her to unlock a closet in her chamber, and bring her a rose-wood box, which stood on the lowest shelf.

The rose-wood box was brought, and in it the deed was found. When it was sent to the lawyer, Joanna offered to assist Mrs. Lorimer in replacing the contents of the box. One compartment was filled with papers; another with antique and valuable trinkets—long silver pins, with jewelled heads; diamond ear-rings, shoe-buckles, and other relics of departed fashions. In replacing a curiously engraved topaz seal, Joanna threw down a folded paper. It opened as it fell, disclosing a lock of hair. “What splendid hair!” exclaimed Joanna, as she lifted it from the carpet, and the black and glossy tress unfolded to more than three feet in length. Mrs. Lorimer sighed as she contemplated it. She opened another paper, and showed Joanna a bright auburn curl. “These locks of hair belonged to two friends of my

youth. How many recollections does the sight of them awaken!" She touched a spring in the side of the box: a shallow drawer was thrown out, in which lay two small morocco cases. Mrs. Lorimer opened one of them, and gave it to Joanna.

"Oh, how beautiful! What eyes and lips! They almost speak: such ringlets, too. Aunt, was not she a genius, as well as a beauty? What a bright, sweet, glad face! One 'to make sunshine in a shady place.' She looks all beauty, hope, and happiness. Who was she, aunt?"

"Her name was Albina Leigh. When that likeness was taken, (and it is not a flattered one) she was, as you say, all beauty, hope and happiness. Her family was rich and respectable; her parents doted on her; no pains were spared on her education, no expense was spared to give her pleasure; she was fed with praise and luxury from her birth."

"No wonder she looks happy," said Joanna.

Mrs. Lorimer shook her head and continued;

“She had warm affections, a generous temper, and a lofty scorn of all *mean* faults. Too proud to be haughty, her manners were peculiarly fascinating; even her vanities were graceful: but, for want of proper training, her very virtues were no better than lovely weeds. Her courage was boldness, her frankness imprudence, and her generosity profusion. She had lived on excitement till excitement was her daily bread; and her sensibilities, naturally too acute for peace, became thoroughly diseased. She married early and imprudently, with her heart full of Arcadian visions of wedded bliss. A *good* husband could not have satisfied her romantic expectations: Albina married a villain. In her father’s house she had never known sorrow; too proud to complain, too impatient to endure, ignorant of the only *True Comforter*, she rushed into society. ‘I can never know happiness,’ she said, when a friend remonstrated with her; ‘I will satisfy myself with pleasure.’ Thus, at sixteen, talented, beautiful, ardent, and *most*

wretched,—Albina was placed in the most dangerous of all positions for a woman, a neglected wife in fashionable society. Her very innocence was a snare to her; for, as she meant no evil, she was not careful to avoid the appearance of it. Of course she was misjudged. Admired and hated, caressed and slandered, she sacrificed health, peace, and reputation in her mad career. She saw her error too late; an early grave received her who might have been——”

The old lady's voice faltered. She took off her spectacles and busied herself in wiping them.

“I cut that curl from her head just before she was put into the coffin; and I tell you her story, Joanna, as a *warning*; for her character in its good and evil, was too like your own.”

Joanna remained silent, gazing at the beautiful face which seemed to smile at her, and many new thoughts passed confusedly over her mind.

“Here,” resumed Mrs. Lorimer, taking a

paper out of the drawer, "are some lines she wrote on the birth-day of her son." Joanna took the paper with a feeling as if it came from the dead.

TO MY SON.

ON HIS BIRTH-DAY.

In cloudless beauty rose the morn,
When thou, my lovely babe, wast born,
Serene along its heavenly way,
Roll'd the effulgent orb of day;
And then I pray'd, that like those skies,
Clear might thy morn of life arise;
Of guilt no cloud, of grief no shower,
To blight nor crush my tender flower,
And will that prayer in heaven be heard?
Or are its golden portals barr'd
For aye against the suppliant cry,
Of one so sad, so lone as I?

As yet my babe, thou canst not know
What waits thee in this world of wo;
The sorrows of thy infant hour,
Sooth'd by a toy, a fruit, a flower.
As yet, sweet boy, thy cheek's young rose
With health's untainted crimson glows;
As yet, the laughter of thine eyes.
To dimpling cheek and lip replies;
Thou hast not learned the needful art
To smile, while anguish rings the heart;
To lock within the struggling sigh,
Give torturing question, calm reply;

And as the warriors shining vest
 Full often hides the mangled breast,
 In quaint array of mirth, conceal
 The wounds of soul that *will not* heal.

Dear boy, thy mother's morn of life,
 Was free as thine from storm and strife.
 Hopes of my youth! your meteor blaze
 One instant flashing on my gaze,
 The next, for ever quenched in night;
 Ye gave my path a transient light,
 That fading, left despair more chill,
 And sorrow's midnight darker still.

The victim of emotions wild.
 Tumultuous passion's wayward child;
 Ah? what avails the brilliant name,
 The wreath of praise the crown of fame!
They cannot sooth reflection's smart,
They cannot bind the broken heart;
 They bloom, like flowers that grave-stones deck,
 Or shine like sunbeams o'er a wreck.

Yet, could I think that all the wo.
 I've known, and must for ever know,
 Would spare *thy* héart one painful thrill.
 Would turn from *thee* one shaft of ill.
 For thy dear sake I'd gladly bear
 Even to the tomb, my load of care;
My heart for misery's target yield,
 So might I *thy* dear bosom shield;
 And welcome every pang to me,
 If recompensed by joy to thee.

The other portrait represented a lady about
 twenty-five. It was a calm, sensible, thought-

ful face, with no pretensions to beauty, except in the dark eyes and luxuriant folds of jet black hair.

“Caroline Melwin,” said Mrs. Lorimer, “was a few years older than myself. She was not remarkable for talent, and, as you see, was not handsome; but she had plain good sense, great constancy of affection, and a very strong sense of duty. When I first knew her, she was as happy as it seemed possible to be. She had an affectionate husband, whom she loved, and two darling children. Theirs was a pleasant home, indeed. They removed from Philadelphia soon after their third child was born; circumstances interrupted our correspondence, and for ten years I heard nothing of them beyond accidental reports. One winter evening I was writing in my husband’s study, when I heard the stage-coach stop at our door, (we lived in the country then,) and presently I was told that a lady wished to see me. I went into the parlour; a lady in deep mourning threw up her crape veil and advanced to meet

me. It was only by her voice that I recognised Mrs. Melwin. I welcomed her warmly, but was afraid to ask for whom she wore mourning. She saw me look at her dress. 'For my husband,' said she, and burst into tears.

"Knowing how they had loved each other, I felt as if she had told me the worst when I knew that she was dead; but I was mistaken:

"She staid with me a week, and at intervals related all that had taken place since I had seen her last. Her husband engaged in a business he did not understand, was cheated and ruined. He was an excellent musician, and his wife sang and played extremely well; he procured an engagement at the theatre, and this was the beginning of sorrows.

"Mr. Melwin's virtues had been those of *situation* not *principle*. The society into which he was now thrown proved most pernicious to him. He was invited to parties, where he enjoyed luxuries they could not afford at home. Night after night poor Mrs. Melwin sat alone, waiting for her husband,

and regretting the time when he used to read to her while she worked. At last he came home *intoxicated*.

“He neglected his business at the theatre, and was discharged. He rambled from city to city, dragging his wife and children with him, forming engagements, breaking them, getting discharged in disgrace, and growing more and more intemperate. His excellent wife did her best for him and her children, but he ceased to love her when he ceased to respect himself; unkindness was soon added to indifference. Still she toiled patiently on, trying to assist him by giving lessons in music; but he never staid long enough in one place to make her exertions profitable. At length, just after their arrival in a strange city, a stroke of palsy, brought on by hard drinking, cast him a helpless burden on the pity of her he had so cruelly wronged.

“Hitherto her trials and her efforts had been private; now she was in a strange place without money, without friends, her helpless hus-

band and four children depending on her for support. The manager of the theatre pitied her; he was not rich, but he did what he could; he knew she sang well, and he advised her to give a concert, and offered to assist her in preparing for it. Caroline was a woman of very quiet, grave manners, and so averse to display that her musical powers had seldom been exerted in her days of affluence, except for the amusement of her family. To appear in public was like being stretched on the rack. But her children were starving, her husband must have a physician, and she consented. What she suffered I will not attempt to describe. Her singing was admired, her situation made known; sympathy was awakened, and it was suggested that a second concert would be even more profitable than the first. As her children were remarkably handsome, and inherited the musical talents of their parents, it was arranged that they should appear with her.

“‘Imagine,’ she said to me, ‘what I must

have endured. Compelled to practise songs with my children in one room, while the dying groans of their father resounded in the next.

“However, the concerts succeeded. She became known and respected, obtained plenty of pupils, and for three years this admirable woman maintained herself, her sick husband, and her children. At the end of that time Mr. Melwin died, and his last words were a blessing on his wife. Shortly afterwards, Caroline’s brother, who had been many years in India, returned to Philadelphia, and sent for her and her children. It was then that she visited me.

“I grieved to see that sorrow and toil had undermined her health, but she seemed so much better during the quiet week we spent together, that I hoped she might be perfectly restored. We parted reluctantly, and she promised to visit me in the course of the next summer. That summer she never saw. She ruptured a blood-vessel soon after she left

Forestville, and died before the leaves were green."

"Oh! aunt, what an angel," sobbed Joanna, whose tears had been silently flowing for some time; "and her children, what became of them?"

"They went with their uncle to Alabama. They were worthy children of such a mother; they profited by the bitter lessons of their infancy, and grew up excellent men and women."

Joanna remained quiet a little while, and then, with a deep sigh, said, "How my heart does ache! Aunt, your stories have made me very sad."

"You look pale, really, Joanna," said Miss Barton, kindly.

Mrs. Lorimer laid her hand on Joanna's clustering curls. "'By the sadness of the countenance, the heart is made better.' God grant, my child, that it may be so with thee."

NOTE.—The character of Caroline Melwin is no sketch of fancy. The author knew and loved the excellent woman whose virtues she has here attempted to portray.

THE YOUNG CHRISTIAN.

~~~~~  
A flower that's offered in the bud,  
Is no vain sacrifice.—WATTS.  
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DR. HENDERSON, a wealthy physician retired from practice, was one of Mrs. Lorimer's most intimate friends; and as he was remarkably cheerful and intelligent, his visits were always joyfully welcomed; particularly by Joanna, who was the Doctor's pet. He delighted in a skirmish of words with the quick-witted girl, and gave her much valuable instruction.

"I met with a little adventure on your staircase just now," said he, one morning, to Miss Barton.

"Pray tell us. An adventure of any kind is worth hearing, in these commonplace days."

"I was coming up rather slowly, you know,"

pointing with his cane to his rheumatic foot, "when, on the flight above, I saw a young gentleman coming down. He was moving even more slowly than I did, and reading so attentively that nothing less audible than a pistol-shot seemed likely to disturb him. I drew aside to watch his progress; but when he reached the landing-place where I stood, he missed a step, stumbled, and almost fell against me. He looked up, started back, took off his hat, and, while I was admiring one of the handsomest heads I ever saw, apologized for his awkwardness with such gentlemanly grace, and in such sweet tones ——"

"As ardent as ever, my old friend," said Mrs. Lorimer, laughing.

The Doctor nodded and went on—"that I had a mind to hug the dear lad; for my heart warms to a boy who loves his book."

"Oh! then, your phoenix is a school-boy."

"About fifteen, I should suppose, but a Sir Philip Sidney in courtesy. So, when his apology was made and received, he went on his

way, as John Bunyan says, and I saw him no more."

"Can you imagine who it is, Susan?"

"Not unless it be one of the new boarders. Mrs. Brown told me she expected a lady with two children."

A quick tapping was now heard at the door, and before Joanna could open it, the knob was turned from without, and Mrs. Brown came in, much flurried.

"I beg your pardon, ladies; but have either of you any hartshorne or smelling-salts?"

Miss Barton took her salts out of her work-basket. "What is the matter, Mrs. Brown?"

"Thank you, miss. Mrs. Field has just fainted away;—" and was hurrying off.

"I will go with you, Mrs. Brown," said Miss Barton; but Mrs. Brown had disappeared.

"Send for me, my dear, if I can be useful," said Dr. Henderson, calling after Miss Barton, as she ran after Mrs. Brown.

Miss Barton soon returned, and said that

Mrs. Field's fainting had been caused by fatigue, she being just recovered from a fit of illness. "This must be the lady Mrs. Brown told me of, last week," said Mrs. Lorimer. "She is a widow."

"Herself and daughter are in deep mourning," said Miss Barton.

"Her husband died not long ago. They are in reduced circumstances, I think. The son is in a lawyer's office, and the mother and daughter wish to open a school."

"They are ladies, decidedly," replied Miss Barton. "Notwithstanding the indisposition of the mother, and the alarm of the daughter, they struck me as women of superior manners."

"Then the son is undoubtedly my *hero of the staircase*," exclaimed Dr. Henderson. "Come, Miss Somers; cannot your active imagination furnish forth a poem or a novel on this interesting group? You might call it the 'Mysterious Family.'"

Joanna reddened, for she did not like to be

rallied on her fondness for the romantic. A saucy repartee hovered on her lip, but Mrs. Lorimer's eye was upon her; she held her peace, and the conversation turned to other subjects.

In the course of the evening, Mrs. Lorimer's maid Phæbe came in, to say that a young gentleman begged to know if she was at leisure, and would see him for a moment. Mrs. Lorimer sent an affirmative message, and the stranger was introduced. The ladies could not but identify the blooming, graceful boy, who entered, with Dr. Henderson's "hero of the staircase." He came to return Miss Barton's salts; and their prepossession in his favour was further heightened by the modest propriety with which he thanked her for her kind attentions to his mother. Mrs. Lorimer requested him to sit down; he accepted her civility with the manner of one who is accustomed to associate with well-bred people, and after a short stay, took his leave, bearing with him the "golden opinions" of the ladies, and

a polite message from Mrs. Lorimer to Mrs. Field.

Summer was ripening into autumn, and still Mr. and Mrs. Somers were absent. Joanna remained under her grand-aunt's care, and the Lorimer party had become quite intimate with the Fields. Mrs. Lorimer, having taken care to ascertain that the character, principles, and habits of the family, were such as to make them proper companions for her grand-daughter and niece, felt that their narrow circumstances, and as the manner in which they bore a bitter reverse of fortune, gave them a double claim on her affection, and commanded her respect. Many plans did she revolve for their benefit; but her income, though affording a respectable independence to herself and orphan grand-child, was not large enough to enable her to offer any essential aid to her new friends. Mrs. and Miss Field were sensible, amiable, elegant, and highly accomplished women; but sense, amia-

bility, elegance, and accomplishments, are not the only capital needed in establishing a boarding-school. Dr. Henderson was out of town; other friends had their interest already engaged. She finally determined to await the return of Mr. Somers, and state the case to him.

Mrs. Field and her daughter frequently spent their evenings with Mrs. Lorimer. Edmund was seldom at leisure, but was always so cordially welcomed by the kind old lady, that it became his custom to call every evening, and inquire if he could perform any little commission for her. When he had an hour to spare, it was his luxury to spend it in Mrs. Lorimer's parlour.

Joanna scarcely knew whether she liked or disliked Edmund Field. He exercised, unconsciously, a power over her mind, which she felt, resented, resisted, and submitted to, without in the least understanding it. It was the power of a *principled* mind over an *impulsive* one; of a mild over a violent temper, and she

benefited, in spite of herself, by the unseen influence.

Joanna's position in life, brilliant as it appeared had some dark shadows, Her mother was an amiable gentle woman, but of limited understanding and timid temper; one of those who are born to be ruled. She was quite unable to comprehend, far less to control the fiery temperament of her daughter. Provided her dress was neat and her movements graceful, if she sinned not against the etiquette of the drawing-room, and her teachers reported well of her improvement, Mrs. Somers was satisfied. Mr. Somers was a well-informed, strong-minded man, but he devoted his energies to business, and left the formation of his daughter's mind to her mother and governess. He was proud of her beauty and talents, and lavish in his indulgence of her caprices. He had married early, and chose his wife for her beauty and gentleness: he found her, as he sometimes thought, like lemonade without the acid. He was determined that "his daughter should not

be *insipid*," and encouraged her quickness of repartee, till her wit became pertness. Mrs. Somers was timid every where, and about every thing. In a boat, in a carriage, at home, abroad, her timidity was in the way of every body's pleasure. Mr. Somers determined "that his daughter should have no feminine weaknesses." He taught her to load and fire a pistol, as soon as her little hands could hold one; to manage a horse, as soon as she could sit on one. Joanna's bold and ardent character well seconded her father's wishes. She gloried in doing what others of her sex feared and blamed; and nothing saved her from becoming thoroughly masculine and disagreeable, but the tenderness of her affections. She loved her gentle mother; she loved her aunt Lorimer, and her cousin Susan; and she tried to tame down her loud tones and boisterous movements in their presence.

In the many conversations she held with Edmund Field, she sometimes grieved him, and frequently grew angry herself; but Edmund

never lost either his politeness or his temper, and she retired from their contests, self-reproving, abashed, and perplexed. She was not very popular among the fashionable juveniles with whom she associated. The boys admired her beauty, but felt rather jealous of her talents; the girls envied both, and were affronted at her contempt (not always very civilly expressed) for their frivolous amusements, their ignorance of poetry, and their love of dress.

Edmund was evidently not dazzled by her genius—and she could not even guess whether he thought her handsome or not. He always treated her with a manliness of respect beyond his years; listened with evident pleasure when she talked rationally of books, or repeated fine passages from her favourite authors: but when she boasted of some unfeminine daring, or defended some questionable theory, he gently and steadily combated her opinions. When she grew angry, he heard her in grave silence, and embraced the first opportunity of taking his leave.

One evening, when Mrs. Field and her daughter were out, Edmund came to make his usual inquiry. Mrs. Lorimer, feeling very unwell, had gone to bed; Miss Barton and Joanna were attending her. Edmund sent in his message by Phœbe, who brought back Miss Barton's compliments, and would thank him to wait a little. He sat down on the sofa. The parlour was cool and quiet, lighted only by a shaded lamp. There was just breeze enough to stir the curtains, and send the odour of Miss Barton's flowers sweetly through the room. Edmund was very weary; he leaned back among the soft cushions; gradually the surrounding quiet stole over his senses, and he fell fast asleep.

His was the sound, sweet sleep of youth; and when Miss Barton and Joanna came in, even the opening and shutting of the door did not disturb him. He was half sitting, half reclining, his cheek pillowed on his clasped hands, which were supported by a pile of cushions,

and his fine features wearing an expression of innocent and smiling composure

Joanna half exclaimed, but Miss Barton's up-lifted finger motioned her to silence.

"He is tired, no doubt. Don't let us disturb him, Joanna."

She stepped softly to the chimney-piece to remove the lamp, but people always seem doomed to make a noise when they are most anxious to avoid it. Her foot struck the tongs, they fell clattering on the marble hearth; Edmund sprang to his feet, and Joanna burst into a loud laugh.

When poor Edmund was sufficiently awake to comprehend where he was, and what had happened, he was much confused, and blushed violently. Miss Barton kindly and politely said—

"You must excuse me, Edmund, for having kept you waiting so long. We were unwilling to leave my grandmother until she seemed inclined to sleep."

"You are very good, Miss Barton," replied

Edmund, glancing reproachfully at the still laughing Joanna; "but I know that an apology is due to *you*. The fact is, I was up at four this morning, and have been walking nearly all day. It was so quiet and comfortable here, that I fell asleep unawares. I hope you will excuse me."

Miss Barton was about to reply, when Mrs. Lorimer's bell rang hurriedly, and she darted away in alarm, leaving Joanna and Edmund standing together. Edmund looked at the young lady; he saw her glance mischievously at him, while suppressed mirth dimpled round her lips; and when she met his eyes, she laughed again. Edmund was at the age to dread being the subject of female ridicule. He felt Joanna's rudeness painfully; he bit his lips, bowed, and turned to leave the room, but she saw that tears stood in his eyes. She was serious in a moment.

"Oh! Edmund," she exclaimed, springing after him, "please to excuse me. Do come back just a minute. I am very sorry. I did

not mean to vex you, but, indeed, I could not help laughing. Don't be angry with me."

"I am not *angry*, Miss Somers," replied Edmund, sadly.

"Then don't look so sad, or I shall cry too. I know I am thoughtless, but I did not mean to be unkind. Won't you forgive me, Edmund? I am *very* sorry."

"It is all over now," said Edmund, smiling gravely, and shaking her offered hand.

"Then don't go away yet. Sit down and talk with me awhile. Your mamma and sister are out, and you will be lonely. But perhaps you are tired, and would rather go to bed?"

"I *am* tired," replied Edmund, sitting down; "but I shall not go to bed till twelve o'clock."

"And up again at four! Why, Edmund, no wonder you are sleepy. What in the world makes you get up so early? Mamma says it is very hurtful to young people not to have enough sleep."

"I should like to sleep longer, but I cannot spare time."

“Why, what on earth can you do up, at four in the morning?”

“I study French.”

“Well, I love learning dearly, but not enough to get up before sun-rise to study.”

“I love learning, and I love my dear mother too. She knows the value of a good education. I have nothing to depend on but my own exertions. She gives me lessons, and I should be very ungrateful if I did not try to profit by them.”

“Oh! Edmund,” said Joanna, touched, “I wish I were as good as you.”

“Good, Miss Somers! ‘there is none good but one—that is God.’”

“Oh! yes, *that way*; but you are good, I am sure. You are always industrious, and obliging, and polite, and dutiful to your mother, and affectionate to your sister; you are never thoughtless, and foolish, and passionate as I am. I am sure, I think you are very good.”

“Oh! Miss Somers, don’t talk so, if you please. It makes me ashamed. If you could

see into my heart, you would know how very, very bad it is. 'The heart is deceitful above all things, and *desperately* wicked.'"

"Why, Edmund, you won't pretend to say that your heart is as wicked as the boy's you told us of yesterday, that stabbed his school-fellow?"

"Indeed, I do say so, Miss Somers. My heart is naturally quite as bad as his, and if I am kept from doing as he did, who made me to differ? I have not power of myself to think one good thought. The Bible tells us, 'If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.'"

"I don't understand you Edmund," said Joanna, looking bewildered.

A long and earnest conversation ensued between the young people, in which Edmund explained to Joanna, as clearly as he was able, the leading doctrines of Christianity. He told her of the depravity of the natural heart, of the necessity of a change of heart before we could be fit for, or happy in a holy heaven, even if

admitted there. He spoke of Jesus Christ, the Son of God; his mysterious incarnation, his wondrous life, and that death upon the cross, whereby he purchased salvation for all those who believe in him, and are willing to be saved by his atoning blood. He spoke also of the work of the Holy Spirit; and how, for Christ's sake, its renewing and sanctifying influences are given to those who believe; and that, as the sacrifice of Christ saves us from the *punishment* of sin, the influence of the Holy Spirit will free us from the *dominion* of sin.

“Now, Miss Somers,” he concluded, “you understand what I mean, when I say that none of us are good. God's restraining grace keeps us from much actual sin, but the seed of sin is born in our hearts, inherited from our first parents, Adam and Eve.”

A new day seemed to dawn upon Joanna's mind as Edmund spoke. Her parents were not pious, and though Mrs. Lorimer and some other of her elder relatives had laboured to

make her comprehend the truths of the gospel, she had listened compulsively, thought of religion as a gloomy, incomprehensible thing, for old people to lecture young ones about, and dismissed the subject from her mind as soon as the lesson was over. But here was a handsome, sensible, elegant boy, only two years older than herself, speaking as if he not only understood, but *felt* and *loved* what he talked of.

“I never understood so much about religion before,” said Joanna, drawing a deep breath when Edmund paused. “Edmund I think you ought to be a minister. Why don’t you study to be a minister?”

The blood rushed to Edmund’s face; his bosom heaved, and he seemed unable to speak. At length, mastering his emotion, “Why don’t I?” he exclaimed. “Why don’t I? If it pleased God, I would give one half of my life, to be a preacher of the gospel for the rest of it. Why don’t I? I’ll tell you, Miss Somers. My parents were rich once. I was to go from school to college. My dear father was ruined

by the great fire in New York. He toiled so hard to settle his affairs, and grieved so much that any body should lose by his misfortunes, that he took a fever and died. My dear mother and sister, accustomed to affluence, (and you know what they are, Miss Somers,) must work for a living; and even if I *could* go to college, I *would* not do it while I can be useful to them. But I study all the spare time I have; and it is my daily and nightly prayer, that God will let me preach his gospel, if he sees fit; and if he *does* see fit, I am sure a way will be opened for me, though I can't tell how."

The clock struck ten. Edmund arose and said it was time for him to go for his mother and sister. Joanna bade him good night with unusual gravity; and when Miss Barton came out of Mrs. Lorimer's room and told her it was time to come to bed, (for the cousins slept together,) she followed in silence, and did not speak until Miss Barton surprised at her unusual taciturnity, inquired whether she was quite well.

The next day Mrs. Lorimer was sufficiently well to take her usual seat in the parlour, but Joanna's thoughtful mood continued. She was, however, unusually gentle, and attentive to her grand-aunt's comfort. She arranged Mrs. Lorimer's cushions, placed her footstool and reading-stand, looked for her spectacles, and found the place in her book. When Mrs. Lorimer was comfortably settled, and began to read, Joanna said to Miss Barton, "If I can do any thing else for aunt or you, cousin Susan, please to call me, I am going into our room;" and she left the parlour.

Some time afterwards Miss Barton went out and when she returned she said to Mrs. Lorimer, "I cannot imagine what ails Joanna. Last night, instead of chattering while we were undressing, as she usually does, until I am tempted to beg her to hold her tongue, she never spoke one word, but looked extremely serious. This morning it was the same. She has hardly opened her lips since she arose."

"Perhaps she is not well," said Mrs Lorimer."

"I asked her, and she said she was quite well. Just now I went up stairs to look for a piece of lace; when I opened the door of our room, she was on her knees at the foot of the bed. She jumped up when I went in, and pretended to be looking for something on the floor; but my Bible was lying open on the bed, and the leaf was wet, as if tears had dropped on it. I wish you would question her, grandmother.

"Not now, Susan. It cannot be an evil influence that sends her to the Bible in secret. Her mind will work itself clear; and if she is not interfered with, she is too frank to withhold her confidence from us long. Poor child! She costs me many an anxious hour."

"One cannot help loving her, though she is, at times, the most provoking little creature in the world. She half affronted Edmund Field last night."

Mrs. Lorimer inquired the particulars, and Miss Barton gave her the history of Edmund's

nap and Joanna's laughter; whereat the old lady was considerably amused.

"They had a long conversation afterwards," continued Miss Barton, "and I fancy it is something Edmund has said which makes her so serious."

"Very likely," replied Mrs. Lorimer. "Edmund is a valuable example for Joanna, and I think she is somewhat improved by it already. He is an uncommon boy. I never saw the Christian graces so perfect in one so young. There is a remarkable *symmetry* in his character; qualities the most opposite are combined, and so admirably balanced, that each supports the other. I wish Joanna had such a brother. It is a great misfortune to her that she is an only child. The dear girl has fine elements of character, but they are in a very chaotic state at present."

Here Joanna entered, and the conversation ceased.

Two days passed, unmarked by any particular event. Joanna was much in her own

room; and when she came into the parlour, her beautiful face still wore a serious expression, and she seemed particularly anxious to offer every little affectionate attention to her aunt and cousin. Both agreed that she had never been so amiable, and Mrs. Lorimer awaited, with no little anxiety, the explanation of a change which she hoped was a token for good.

Soon after breakfast, on the third day, a note came to Mrs. Lorimer, requesting her and Miss Barton to spend the day with an invalid friend. Mrs. Lorimer sent for a carriage, and prepared for the visit. While Phœbe was bringing her bonnet and shawl, another note was sent up. "Quite a day of letters," said Mrs. Lorimer, opening and looking over it. "From Dr. Henderson—arrived last night—has settled Wilson's business—will call at eleven o'clock, &c., &c."

"This is awkward," said Mrs. Lorimer, folding up the note. "I must not disappoint Mrs. Glenn, and there is no time to write.

Joanna, my dear, you must receive the Doctor for me. Explain to him why I am absent, and tell him I shall be at home by five in the evening, if he will be so good as to call then."

Mrs. Lorimer was pinning her shawl about her throat, and did not observe the delight that sparkled in Joanna's eyes as she spoke.

When the ladies were gone, Joanna took her post at a front window, and seemed fearful of turning her eyes for a moment from the street. After an hour's unceasing watch, her patience was rewarded; she saw Dr. Henderson cross the street, and flew down stairs in time to answer his knock.

"So you are all alone, Miss Somers," said the Doctor, looking round, as Joanna ushered him into the parlour. "Where are the ladies?"

Joanna gave him Mrs. Lorimer's message.

"Upon my word! you gipsy, could you not have told me this below, and saved my lame foot the pain of scaling the Alps of your staircase?"

"I—I forgot your foot, sir—and—and—I

wanted to speak to you myself," faltered Joanna, her colour changing, and her breath coming quick.

The Doctor was surprised at the evident agitation of the young lady, and looked keenly at her varying countenance. "You wanted to speak to me, my dear?" Come, then, let me hear the mighty secret. Sit down by me, and begin. What, you have got into some little scrape, and want me to settle matters with your aunt, hey?"

Joanna instantly ceased to blush and tremble. "No sir," said she, firmly, meeting the Doctor's scrutinizing glance with calm, clear eyes; "No sir. I have done nothing bad. I only want to tell you how you may do something good."

"Indeed," said the Doctor, smiling, but considerably impressed by her earnest, and even lofty manner; "well, sit down, my child, and tell me what you would have me do."

Thus encouraged, Joanna seated herself on the sofa beside the Doctor, and related, at full

length, her conversation with Edmund. "And now, dear Doctor Henderson," she concluded, "you are very rich, and I know you are very kind. Cannot you help Edmund Field to be a minister? I would ask papa, but he is away; and besides—" she hesitated, "besides, papa does not care as much about making people ministers as you do. Papa would take him into the counting-house, I know; but it would be hard, Doctor Henderson, wouldn't it? that he should have to spend all his life casting up dollars and cents, when he wants to be preaching the gospel."

"Bless you, my dear little girl," said the old gentleman, much affected; "you might well tell me you could help me to do good; and I am obliged to you for it, Joanna."

He then questioned her as to the situation, character, wishes, and prospects of the family. "I will call on your aunt this evening, my dear, and have some talk with her about your friends. If she thinks as highly of them as you do, Joanna, your young preacher shall

not spend his life in casting up dollars and cents."

"Thank you, thank you, a thousand times, dear Doctor Henderson," said Joanna, taking his hand in both hers, and pressing it warmly; "you are very good."

"Opportunities for doing evil, the proverb says, come a hundred times a day; those for doing good, but once a year. We should seize them when they come. Tell your aunt I shall wait on her at six. Good bye, my pretty pet."

Joanna attended the Doctor down stairs; then, returning with light steps to the parlour, she closed the door, and, obedient to the new impulse her mind had received, knelt down and thanked God that he had put it into Dr. Henderson's heart to listen to her.

According to promise, at six in the evening the good Doctor made his appearance. He first saw Mrs. Lorimer, and, having heard her full and favourable opinion of Mrs. Field and her family, he requested an interview with the lady herself.

The particulars of their conversation I never learned, but, to judge by the results, it must have been satisfactory to all parties, for within a month after it took place, Mrs. and Miss Field had opened a boarding-school, (which, under the patronage of the learned and wealthy Dr. Henderson, soon became a flourishing establishment,) and Edmund was on his way to Princeton College.

The winter of this year set in with uncommon severity, and Mrs. Lorimer's physician advised her to lose no time in removing to a warmer climate. It was therefore determined that she should spend the winter in Charleston, and Miss Barton set about preparing for the voyage, with all possible despatch.

It was a melancholy day when Mrs. Lorimer and Miss Barton left Mrs. Brown's. They endeared themselves to every member of the

family, and when the carriage containing the venerable lady and her amiable grand-daughter drove from the door, Mrs. Brown came up stairs, and, looking round the vacant parlour, sat down and wept without restraint.

Mrs. Gibbs, a woman who sometimes came to assist in doing house-work, had followed Mrs. Brown into the parlour, and stood gaping at her with evident astonishment.

“Laws! Mrs. Brown, why you couldn’t take on worse if your own flesh and blood was a going to leave you. Laws! why I dare say you’ll soon get somebody else as good pay as old Mrs. Lorimer.”

“It is not *that* I’m thinking of,” said Mrs. Brown, looking up indignantly; “if the next comer should pay me twice as much as she did, and ten times more to the back of that, it wouldn’t pay me for losing them. If ever there was a saint on earth, it’s that dear old lady. And her grand-daughter ain’t far behind her in goodness, bless her!”

“I reckon they must a give you a good deal

of trouble," remarked Mrs. Gibbs; "the old lady had sick turns so often."

"Trouble, indeed! there wasn't one of the family, boarders as well as ourselves, that wouldn't have gone on their hands and knees to do any thing for Mrs. Lorimer, morning or midnight. I was sorry enough to part with Mrs. Field and her dear children, but it's nothing to seeing that dear, dear old lady leave the house ——" a fresh burst of tears interrupted Mrs. Brown's voice.

"Law! me!" ejaculated the uncomprehending Mrs. Gibbs.

INFATUATION.

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Wherefore trace from what slight cause,  
Its source one tyrant passion draws,  
Till mastering all within ;  
Where lives the man who has not tried,  
How *mirth* can into *folly* glide,  
And *folly* into *sin* ?—SCOTT.  
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MRS. BROWN set her rooms in order, and prepared to undergo the routine of inspection, questions, objections, offers, and demurs ; but upon this occasion her patience was not put to a protracted trial. About a week after Mrs. Lorimer's departure, she had a successor in the person of Mr. Selby.

Mr. Selby merely ascertained that the rooms were handsome and well furnished, when he engaged them at once ; observing, in reply to Mrs. Brown's statement of terms, " Ah ! yes—very reasonable—very reasonable, indeed,"

with a carelessness which gave the good woman a high opinion of his wealth and gentility.

Mr. Selby was a tall, well-made man, about thirty-five, having a foppishly-fashionable air, an ease of manner so elaborate as to make every one else uneasy, an affability that was almost supercilious, and a smile so perpetual as to suggest the idea that he who smiled so much could seldom smile sincerely. Nevertheless, as he was quiet and regular, paid his bills punctually, was civil to Mrs. Brown, and very liberal to the domestics, he was spoken of by mistress and servants as "very much of a gentleman." He sometimes gave card parties, and on these occasions splendid refreshments were provided, and exquisite wines were pressed upon the guests. Mr. Selby, however, seldom tasted any beverage stronger than lemonade.

Selby's most frequent visiter was a young student of medicine. Mr. Clerrison spent a great deal of time in Selby's parlour, writing notes, which he sealed very carefully, and despatched by Selby's black servant, Mark

These notes were frequently accompanied by little parcels, containing books, trinkets, elegant confectionary, foreign fruits—in short, such delicate offerings as men in love delight in laying before the shrine of their idol-worship. Answers to the notes were sometimes brought, which always procured for Mark a glittering token of Clerrison's delight. These answers were read and re-read, kissed often, and then carefully consigned to the breast-pocket of the lover's coat.

At first Clerrison appeared in Selby's parlour only in the daytime, and the intercourse of notes was constant. As the winter wore on, he came seldomer in the morning, but was a frequent guest at the evening card-parties. Sometimes he and Selby spent the evening alone together: cards were then the never-failing amusement, and more than once the late winter morning dawned on them while thus engaged. At these times large rolls of bank notes were transferred from the pocket-book of Clerrison to that of Selby. Every evening so

spent seemed to increase his fondness for play, and if ever he appeared reluctant to engage in it, a well directed compliment from Selby on his skill, or an assurance that his run of ill luck must be nearly out, drew him again to the infatuating sport. Mean time, Mark carried letters less often; those written were shorter, and seldom accompanied by presents; while the answers were hastily perused, and not unfrequently thrust into the pocket unopened.

One morning in the beginning of April, Clerrison wrote a brief note, and requested that Mark might carry it.

“He is at your orders, my dear fellow,” replied Selby, pulling the bell. “What! writing to the little girl again?”

“I promised to spend last evening with her. You know who hindered me. Poor Louisa; I owe her at least a civil excuse.”

“By the bye—nothing just now, Mark. I’ll ring again when you are wanted. (Exit Mark.) By the bye what do you mean to do about her?”

“ Ah! there’s the puzzle. Poor little girl, she is so dotingly fond of me, too—it would break her heart if——”

“ Bah! my good fellow, women’s hearts are not so easily broken. Besides, remember your old gentleman and your lady mother, too——”

“ Proud as Lucifer she is, you know. They might get over poor Louy’s poverty, but the idea of my marrying a girl who had lived in the family as seamstress——” Selby interrupted him with a loud laugh.

“ Marrying her! my dear boy! marrying her! I thought you knew more of the world—marrying her! The only son of John Julius Clerrison, Esq., a *millionaire* of the Quaker city, *marrying* a little mantua-maker!”

Clerrison’s countenance exhibited a mixture of mortification and anger; he bit his lip, and Selby, whose keen eye noted the rising passion, went on—“ Upon my soul, Clerrison, you must excuse me.” Then, assuming a serious air, “ I mean no disrespect to Miss Brooke; she’s certainly a charming girl; but to think of you

—you, with your advantages of person and fortune;” Clerrison’s brow relaxed; “you, who might choose among the richest and fairest—you, who have such advantages—now a poor headlong fellow like myself, might do such a thing—but you who have such a sound judgment—”

The weak boy listened with credulous pleasure.

“Selby,” said he, suddenly, “I believe you are my friend.”

“Your friend!—oh! my dear fellow, you know how sincerely ——”

“Well,” interrupted Clerrison, “I will confide in you. You shall know exactly how I am situated. I want you to advise me. But stop; first I must finish my note to Louisa.” He took up the pen. “By the way, she asked me, a week ago, to bring her some flower paintings to copy. I had forgotten it entirely. Selby, have you any engravings or drawings to lend me?”

“Not I, faith; but here, this fire-screen is

admirably painted. It belongs to the house, but never mind, we'll borrow it. Miss Brooke can copy that. Make haste with your note, Clerrison, for I have an appointment at two."

Clerrison finished his note. I was wrapped in paper, Mark was summoned, the note and myself delivered into his hands, and Clerrison sat down to pour his confidence into the ear of *the gambler*.

"A note and parcel? oh! give me the note!" exclaimed a sweet female voice. The note was read, my covering was torn off, but, after a hasty glance, I was laid on the table, and the note was re-perused and scrutinized, as if the reader hoped to discover, by examination, more than the words had conveyed to her at first.

I found myself in the small parlour of a small house, in a narrow street. There was a rag carpet on the floor, a cherry table, and half a dozen cane-coloured, wooden chairs, with a

settee to match, and a small mirror. But several books were piled on the table, a guitar-case lay under it, and on a round stand, near the single window, stood a little vase of beautiful china, holding a bunch of snow-drops. Paper and pencils lay beside the vase, and a large basket of needle-work stood on the floor, at the feet of the reader.

She was a fair young girl; but her beauty was less remarkable than the anxious sadness of her expression. She raised her eyes from the note once or twice, shook her head, as if indignant, and then read on. The indignant expression softened; she folded the note, and placed it in her bosom.

“I am wrong,” she said, “I am unjust. Alas! suffering has made me unjust. I am not what I was. Shame on me to suspect so readily! His time *must* be much occupied now, and his duties must be attended to. He has violated one duty for me. God forbid that my exacting fondness should lead him to neglect any other. I have wrought the web of my

own destiny, and I must not complain if it should prove to be a shroud."

Like most keenly feeling people, when excited, Louisa had a habit of talking to herself. She went on.

"Charles! *dear* Charles! Forgive me, if in my sorrow I doubt your affection. But oh! my heart aches with such wearying pain." She took me up from the table. "It is beautiful—very beautiful—and it is very kind in him to think of my wish, but I cannot copy it now. I feel too wretched, and I have work that must be done." She gathered up the pencils and paper. "I thought to paint you to-day," said she, addressing the snow-drops, "but you must even wither, as I am like to do, unremembered. Oh! Charles, there *was* a time when no pressure of business, no call of duty would have kept you away from me for three days. I have no pleasure in any thing now. When *he* valued my talents, I was proud of them, and tried to improve them for his sake. And I tried hard. No wonder I look so pale, when I

have stolen so many hours from sleep that I might read, and draw, and practise, so as to make myself a fit companion for him when the time comes. Oh! my God—has he ceased to wish it to come!”

She burst into tears, wringing her hands, and sobbing in all the agony of a grief seemingly heightened by doubt and fear. Her tears apparently relieved her, for she sat up after a few minutes of this bitter indulgence, wiped her eyes, and said in a resolute tone, “This must not be. I have brought the trial on myself and I will bear it, but I will not live long in this mean and miserable suspense.” She left the room, and presently returned, having smoothed her disordered hair, and bathed her swollen eyes. It was a sad sight to see a creature so young and lovely, so very miserable. External evils may be borne or remedied, “but a wounded spirit, who can bear.” Louisa sat down by her work-basket, and taking out what appeared to be a portion of trimming for a rich dress, began to work diligently, betray-

ing her inward emotion only by occasional sighs. Once she began to sing, but after murmuring a few lines, she stopped. "I cannot sing. The last time I sang and played to *him*, he praised Miss Dupont's harp."

While she sat at her sewing, a carriage thundered along the street, and stopped at the door. Louisa started up, threw some of the books into the table drawer, and turned to receive the ladies who entered. They were tall, handsome, and fashionable-looking women, sufficiently alike in dress and person, to be immediately known for sisters; but the younger was distinguished by a pleasanter expression, and milder voice. Louisa courtesied, and hastened, with trembling hands to place chairs.

"Well, Miss Brooke," began the elder lady, in a harsh, imperious tone, "I have called, as I sent you word, to have my dress fitted. Make haste, if you please. I have no time to spare."

"You don't look well, Louisa," observed the younger, in a kind tone. "Take your

time with Elvira's dress. I can call again about mine."

"They are both ready, ladies, so soon as I have tacked on this trimming. Shall I fix on yours before you try it, Miss Clerrison?" to the elder lady. Miss Clerrison nodded assent, and Louisa quitted the parlour, taking the trimming in her hand.

"How pale poor Louisa looks," said the younger sister. "I am sure this dress-making does not agree with her. When she lived with us she was as fresh as a rose."

"I suppose she is fretting after Charles," replied Miss Clerrison, coldly. "A presumptuous thing! I don't pity her at all;—what business had she to turn her eyes on Charles Clerrison?"

"What business, then, had Charles Clerrison to turn his eyes on her? Louisa's poor, to be sure, but her family was quite as good as ours, and she is handsome, sensible, and virtuous. Charles may go farther and fare worse."

"Julia, don't provoke me. Charles Clerri-

son, who might marry into one of the first families in the United States, to take for a wife a girl who has been his mother's seamstress!"

"Her having been a seamstress makes her neither better nor worse, except as it affects her manners and character. Now, if she were vulgar, ignorant, or unprincipled, that would be another affair; but if she is calculated to adorn and enjoy a higher station, it would only be according to the natural fitness of things, to help her into it."

"What a horrid leveller you are, Julia."

"No, sister. I am as thorough an aristocrat as an American ought to be. I would have distinct ranks in society, for I think that God has ordained them, and man is made wretched by striving to abolish them; but I would not have rank to depend on wealth. I would bow first to the aristocracy of Virtue, then come the claims of Genius. I have, I confess, a little leaning to pride of birth, for who would not rejoice in the blood of Washington or Franklin? But pride of purse—oh! I *do* despise it."

“I suppose, then, you would advise Charles to behave like a fool, and marry Louisa Brooke?”

“You know me better than to suppose that I would advise Charles to do what would so incense our parents; but better behave like a fool than a villain—if, indeed, it is possible to be one without being the other. However, if Charles *were* to marry Louisa, in my opinion she would get the worst of it.”

“Julia Clerrison!”

“Yes. Louisa is a strong-minded; warm hearted girl. She is handsome and well mannered enough to be introduced into any circle, and has supplied the deficiencies of her early education to a surprising extent. Charles is weak and fickle—her steadiness of character might support the instability of his; though I really doubt whether he *can* appreciate such affection as Louisa would give.”

“Your brother is very much obliged to you,” said Miss Clerrison, with increasing asperity; “but he shall never marry beneath him if I

can help it; and to tell you the truth, if it was not to keep an eye on the girl's movements, she should never make another dress for me. I wonder if she is going to keep us all day."

The impatient lady was stepping to the door, when Louisa entered, laken with the ball-dresses. They were tried on, and, after much ill-humoured fault-finding on the part of Miss Clerrison, the final directions were given, and the ladies departed, Miss Julia dropping her glove as she bade Louisa good bye. The front door was heard to open, but Miss Julia, exclaiming "Pray stop a moment, sister, I have dropped my glove," ran back into the parlour, and, flying to Louisa, whispered, "Dear Louisa, you look wretchedly. I would advise you to try country air for a few weeks. Go to Camden or Germantown. Don't sew too constantly."

"Julia!" exclaimed Miss Clerrison, from the entry.

"I'm coming. If you are short of money, dear Louy, my purse is yours. God bless

you." She threw her arms around Louisa's neck, kissed her fervently, and ran out of the room.

Louisa sat still, her bosom heaving convulsively, but she did not allow herself to weep. "It is hard, hard to bear," she said at length; hard to bear from *his sister*. And yet Julia's kindness cuts deeper than Elvira's pride; but still it comforts me. Sweet, sweet Julia; Heaven reward you for the balm you have poured into my heart this day. Oh! Charles, I suffer a great deal for your sake; but if you smile the whole world may frown."

Steadily repressing her feelings, she arranged her scattered work, and sat down again to her needle; but this was to be a fateful day to poor Louisa. Scarcely was she engaged with her work, when there was a loud knock at the street door, and presently a young man rushed into the parlour, and caught her in his arms.

"My dear Louisa—my darling sister!"

"My brother! my own dear Allen!"

These and similar disjointed expressions

of affection were all that passed between the brother and sister for some time. When the excitement of meeting began to subside, Mr. Brooke sat down on the settee, and drew Louisa down beside him.

“Come, Louisa; and sit beside me. Let me feel at home once more.”

“Let me get you something to eat, first; you must be hungry as well as tired.”

“Well, I should enjoy a cup of tea—*home tea*, Louisa. I breakfasted on board the steamboat, and was too impatient to swallow any thing at dinner time.”

Tea was prepared as quickly as possible. When Allen had satisfied his appetite, he stretched himself out on the settee, and his sister put a cushion under his head.

“Oh! how comfortable this is. ‘Be it ever so humble, there’s no place like home.’ Oh! how tired I am. I have travelled night and day since I left St. Louis. Come sit by me, dearest, and tell me all that has happened. Did you get the money I remitted?”

“Safely. Had you a pleasant journey?”

“Very. It is worth a western tour to look at the beautiful country. I might have lingered a little, but your letter, my darling, after having been twice sent to wrong places, met me at St. Louis, and I lost no time in hastening to you.”

Louisa seemed confused, and said, hurriedly, “Did you succeed?”

“Entirely. Wilkins and Brooke open store on the first of June. We have little time enough, Louy, for preparations and journey. Once away from Philadelphia, this dear cheek will bloom again, I hope. And if our little capital should be the seed of a goodly harvest, and Charles is constant, sister, why, Miss Louisa Brooke, the sister of the rich western merchant, may —— My dear sister!”

Louisa’s head had sunk on her brother’s shoulder, and she wept with convulsive violence.

“Louisa, what is the matter? Compose yourself, my dear girl, you alarm me.”

“Oh! brother, forgive me.”

“Forgive you, Louisa; what have I to forgive? Is it possible ——” he seized his sister’s arm, and his lips grew white, as he looked searchingly in her face.

Louisa understood the mute agony of his asking look, and eagerly replied, “No, no; oh! no, brother, no—not *that*; thank Heaven, not that! but I am scarcely less miserable, and perhaps not less guilty.”

“Collect yourself at once, Louisa, and explain.”

“Allen, I am married.”

“Married!—and to Charles Clerrison. Oh! Louisa—and *secretly* married, of course.”

Louisa bowed her head.

Allen started from the settee and walked about the room. “Married! This I did *not* expect. Clandestinely, too. And his proud, insolent, unfeeling family. Louisa, where was your self-respect—your pride—your *honest* pride—your delicacy?”

“Spare me, brother,” said Louisa, clasping

her hands entreatingly. "All that you can say, I have said to myself. I have done wrong. I feel that I have—dreadfully, perhaps fatally wrong. But I have wrought my own fate, and will abide by it. I *love* Charles, and if he continues to love me ——"

"If—Louisa, that *if* betrays that he has already given you cause to doubt it. And why, if you are his wife, do I find you still toiling in this occupation?" touching her work-basket with his foot.

"Not with his good will," eagerly replied Louisa. "He entreated, he almost commanded me to give it up, but I refused. Partly to ward off suspicion, and partly because, until I was his *acknowledged* wife, I could not bear to owe my support to him. Oh! brother, you know not how terrible a struggle I went through before I yielded to the weakness of my heart. I wrote to you when I felt my resolution failing. Had my letter reached you in time ——"

"Oh! that it had. My poor sister, you *must* have suffered. But this must not go on, I

will see Charles. If he is willing to acknowledge his marriage, very well. You must expect some bitter trials, but any thing is preferable to a life of deceit."

"Oh! yes, indeed. And if my husband continues to love me, I am ready and willing to brave all consequences. Come what may, I shall be happy. It is only for his sake I would avoid his father's anger; he will turn Charles out of doors."

"He has *deserved* his father's anger; and our doors are open to him. Our home is humble, Louisa, and Charles has been a spoiled child; but we will toil for him, darling, as willingly as we have done for each other, and if he loves you, he will soon learn to strive for himself."

Louisa threw herself into Allen's arms. He kissed her fondly, and resumed—

"I will go to Charles immediately."

"But you are both hasty. Dear brother——"

"Don't be afraid, Louisa. I will consult my friend Martin, and take him with me. I will

deliver a packet of importance with which I am charged, and then seek Charles. Do you go and lie down, you look exhausted. I will return to you as soon as possible."

He kissed her again, and left the room and the house. Louisa listened till the street-door closed, then, snatching up a pencil, she wrote a few lines, wrapped them up with me in a parcel, and summoning her only domestic, directed the girl to go to Mrs. Brown's boarding-house, ask to see Mr. Selby, and desire him to give that parcel as directed.

The girl fulfilled her commission, and Selby, restoring me to my former station on the mantelpiece, handed the note to Clerrison. Wine and cigars were on the table; two young men were lounging on the sofa, and smoking. Clerrison sat near the wine, of which he drank frequently. Selby occupied an arm-chair near the fire.

“I’ll tell you what I would do, Clerrison,” said one of the youths on the sofa, knocking the ashes off his cigar. “I’d cut the concern, and go to Texas. I would, upon my soul.”

“Easier said than done, Harrington; especially as this note from my wife tells me that her brother is in town. I wish he had never left it, for he kept a hawk’s eye over Louisa, and would have seen her dead rather than privately married.”

“Cannot you get somebody to take her off your hands, eh! Clerry?”

The face of the half intoxicated boy flushed with something like shame, and there was emotion in his voice as he replied, “Come, Harrington, that’s going rather too far. If Miss Brooke had not been so cursedly virtuous, she never would have been my wife.”

“A gentleman, sar, wants to see Mr. Clerrison,” said Mark, throwing open the parlour door, and Allen Brooke walked into the centre of the astonished group. “Mr. Selby, I pre-

sume," said he, glancing round and bowing to Selby.

"At your service, sir," rising and returning the bow.

"You will excuse this intrusion, Mr. Selby; having important business with Mr. Clerrison, I called at his father's house, and, not finding him, inquired where I should be likely to meet with him. I was directed here. Mr. Clerrison, will you take a short walk with me? I have something particular to say to you."

Clerrison quailed before the quiet determination of his brother-in-law's manner, and mechanically rose to accompany him.

"Pray sit down, Mr. Brooke," interfered Selby, with flourishing politeness; "all friends here—beg leave to congratulate you. You will take a glass of wine with us, to the health of Mrs. Charles Clerrison?"

"You have declared your marriage, then?" said Brooke, steadily, and disregarding Selby's invitation.

Clerrison bowed.

“To your parents?”

He stammered a negative.

“Will you walk out with me, Mr. Clerrison; or is it your wish that our business should be discussed before the present company?”

The youth who had advised Clerrison to desert his wife and go to Texas, arose, muttered something about not wishing to intrude, and left the room. Brooke stood waiting for Clerrison's answer, and Clerrison looked in awkward embarrassment from one to the other.

The other young man on the sofa, who had not yet spoken, but had been an attentive observer of Clerrison's manner, now arose and addressed Allen.

“I believe I have the pleasure of speaking to Mr. Brooke?”

An affirmative bow was the answer.

“I have seen Mrs. Charles Clerrison once or twice, though I have never been presented to her. Mr. Clerrison” (with emphasis) “*knows* me for his friend. I strenuously opposed his marriage *until it took place*. The irrevoca-

ble step being taken, I now say, that the duties he has voluntarily assumed, render it imperative on him to acknowledge his marriage as soon as possible. Knowing my opinion, I trust, Mr. Brooke, that you will appreciate my motives when I offer my services to you and Mr. Clerrison in the arrangement of your plans. Here is my card."

"Mr. Curtis," said Allen, looking at the card, and grasping his offered hand, "I thank you. Most gratefully do I accept your offer, especially as the friend whose company here I meant to request, is unexpectedly absent."

"In my opinion, then," said Curtis, "the proper, indeed the only course for Mr. Clerrison to take, as a man of honour, is to acknowledge his marriage immediately. Mr. Clerrison, senior, will doubtless be very indignant, for I know he had particular views for his son; nevertheless, this difficulty must be met."

"You do not know my father," interposed Charles. "He will be furious. It is for Louisa's sake ——"

“For your wife’s sake,” continued Curtis, “the disclosure should be immediate. Mrs. Charles must be in a state of mind most painful and mortifying to a woman of sensibility. No man has a right to inflict such suffering; especially on the woman he professes to love, or the woman he has sworn to protect.”

Brooke had with difficulty kept silence hitherto; he could refrain no longer.

“My sister will not be without a protector while I live, Mr. Curtis.”

“A woman’s happiness, my dear sir, needs to be protected as well as her reputation. Your sister has placed that sacred deposite in her husband’s hands. *He* must now be responsible for it. But we are wandering from the business in hand. Charles, your marriage must be declared some time or other. Your father’s just displeasure must be encountered. Is it likely he will be less displeased six months or a year hence, than he will be to-day?”

“But my studies are not finished. I cannot take my degree till next year. I have nothing

independent of my father—he makes me a handsome allowance now—when he knows I am married, he will cast me off. How am I to maintain Louisa and myself?”

“You should have thought of that before!” exclaimed Brooke, sternly; while Curtis’ lip curled with an expression of impatient contempt.

“But I say to you, as I have already said to Louisa, you shall share our means. My sister can endure poverty, but her peace and honour shall *not* be trifled with any longer.”

“Mr. Brooke,” said Curtis, warmly, “I honour you.”

“My patience has been tried to the utmost,” said Brooke, struggling to preserve his calmness. “Not one word or look of yours, Mr. Clerrison, has been such as a brother can receive with satisfaction; but for Louisa’s sake, I will try to forbear. Mr. Curtis *you* have merited perfect frankness at my hands. I wish to put you in possession of the facts of the case. That gentleman’s father and mine were

old acquaintances. By the fluctuations of commerce, he grew rich while we grew poor. Louisa and I were early orphans. Mrs. Clerrison took Louisa into her family as seamstress, when she was about fourteen. I went into a dry goods store. When I had learned the business, I obtained employment as a clerk. My sister has great skill at her needle, and Mrs. Clerrison paid her liberally. We were anxious to have a home of our own, and that I should go into business on my own account. Every cent that we could save has been hoarded for this purpose. About a year ago, I noticed that my sister was losing her health and spirits. I inquired the cause, and she confessed that Charles Clerrison had courted her secretly for some time, and that he had made an impression on her affections. Girlish timidity made her unwilling to tell me this, but she had struggled with her feelings till her health sunk under them. She knew his family would never hear of such an alliance, and begged me to take her from the house. My plan was

formed at once. I took a small house, and we went to house-keeping. Still intent on our grand object, we lived as frugally as possible. I continued in my clerkship, and my dear Louisa worked at embroidery and dress-making. Louisa behaved nobly; she sincerely and steadily tried to overcome her ill-starred affection, but her disposition, poor girl, is constancy itself. Last September, I had an excellent offer of entering into a partnership, and settling at St. Louis. I went out to see the place, and ascertain the chances of success before I closed the engagement. I was taken ill on the road which delayed me a long time, and after my arrival at St. Louis, I had a relapse. During my prolonged absence, Mr. Clerrison sought Louisa again. He did every thing man could do, to convince her that his happiness depended on her becoming his wife. Louisa held out for a long time, but she is not quite eighteen; she loves him, and thought she had every reason to confide in the strength of his attachment. She felt her resolution failing, and

wrote to me, asking what she had better do. The letter miscarried. She waited in vain for an answer; Charles was near her, pleading his own cause. The moment I was able I hastened back. I came too late—and believe me, Mr. Curtis, the rich Mr. Clerrison cannot more bitterly regret this ill-assorted marriage, than poor Allen Brooke.”

“I *believe* you,” answered Curtis meaningly. “I thank you for this confidence. Charles, I will, if you authorize me to do so, wait on your father immediately, and break the matter to him as gently as possible. *You* will trust me, Mr. Brooke?”

Allen’s eyes glistened as he replied, “With my life. With more, Louisa’s peace.”

Curtis looked at his watch. “It is near six o’clock. I will go to Mr. Clerrison this moment. You, Charles, had better go to my lodgings, and I will meet you and Mr. Brooke there at nine o’clock. I hope I shall have good news to tell you.”

Selby who had cautiously refrained from in-

terfering, now hastened to declare, with many over-strained professions of friendship, that his apartments were entirely at the service of his dear friend Clerrison, and in spite of the visible reluctance of Curtis and Brooke, it was settled that Charles should await the result of the embassy in Selby's parlour, Selby professing to have an engagement abroad.

Nine o'clock came. Brooke was shown in as the last stroke of the hour pealed from the State House clock, and he was hardly seated before Curtis ran into the room, out of breath, his countenance indicating considerable satisfaction.

"Good news, my dear Charles. Mr. Brooke, I beg your pardon. I did not see you."

"Is my father satisfied?" eagerly asked Charles, looking, however, as if it would not have distressed him much, had he been told that his father insisted on having the marriage annulled.

“Satisfied! why Charles, that’s rather too much to expect—when a man has been disappointed in the first wish of his heart, and by an only son, too. However, on the whole, the old gentleman has behaved nobly. It will be all your own fault if—Mr. Brooke, I beg your pardon again. I am keeping you in suspense. I’ll begin at the beginning. I asked for your father, Charles, and was shown into the library. The old gentleman was reading the newspaper. I began as cautiously as possible; however, he took the alarm, and bade me speak out at once, in a way that I should not have liked; if his head had not been as white as my own dear old father’s. Well, I unfolded the mystery, setting things out to the best advantage; and he listened with his lips squeezed close, till I had done. It’s surprising how soon one finishes when one is not interrupted, and I was obliged to come to a stop. Then the storm burst out. I thought there was no hope for you, Charles, I confess; but when Mr. Clerrison had raved himself out of

breath, he rang the bell, and sent for your mother and sisters. Then the hurricane raged again. Mrs. Clerrison was frantic: Miss Clerrison heaped fuel on the fire, but your sister Julia, bless her little heart! took your part. She hung round her father's neck, owned that Charles had done very wrong—but then she reminded him how Charles and Louisa had been brought up together: 'and you know, papa, you used to love Louisa, and take her on your knee when she was a little girl; and I'm sure Louisa loves you as if you were her own father; and she's pretty and good enough for any body to be proud of ——'

"God bless her!" ejaculated Allen.

"'And she has every thing but money, papa, and you can give her that.' In short, I am a bad narrator, but the end of it was, Mr. Clerrison desired the ladies to retire, and then said, 'Mr. Curtis, I must take a little time for reflection. I am severely shocked.' I begged to know when I should wait on him again. It was then seven o'clock. He looked at his

watch, and said, in one hour. I took my leave, and walked about until the hour expired; at eight o'clock I presented myself before him. He was walking up and down the library, looking troubled, but not angry. He asked me to sit down, and said, 'Mr. Curtis, I have made up my mind. I will give you a message for Charles. I do not feel able to write. You will promise to deliver it word for word?' I bowed and promised.

"'Tell Charles,' said he, 'that I regret his marriage, not only because it destroys my long-cherished hopes, and because he has insulted and disobeyed his parents in contracting it, but because I think his conduct a proof that he will give his wife cause to regret it too. Charles is a boy, an unsteady boy, and with shame I confess it, a spoiled boy; he was the child of my old age.' The poor old gentleman turned away, and put his handkerchief to his eyes. Charles, I could have knocked you down just then. 'However,' he resumed, 'what's done can't be undone. Miss Brooke is a worthy

girl, and her brother a fine young man. These are the conditions I give you leave to propose to my son. I am far from satisfied with what I have heard of his general conduct this winter. If he will consent to live apart from his wife for one year,'—hear me out, Mr. Brooke. 'If he will consent to live apart from his wife for one year; if he will spend that year quietly under his father's roof—if he will give up all his dissipated companions, and attend to his studies, so that he may pass his examination with credit—at the end of that time, I will receive his wife as my daughter. I will buy a house and furnish it completely for them, and supply Charles with all that is necessary for a handsome outset in his profession. During the year of probation, I will continue his present allowance, and I will provide for the support of Miss Brooke as a gentlewoman; *but they must not see each other.*'"

"Miss Brooke has a brother who will provide for her support," said Allen, proudly.

"I remonstrated," continued Mr. Curtis,

“against the clause which forbade them to see each other; but Mr. Clerrison was inflexible. ‘I know my son better than you do,’ said he. ‘Unstable as water, he shall not excel.’ I have much to forgive, much to bear with in this cruel disappointment of all my hopes; and believe me, it is for Miss Brooke’s welfare, no less than his own, that I insist on these conditions. If they continue to love each other, very well; they shall have my blessing. If not, it will be better for them both, that their childish marriage should be annulled. I have no more to say but this. Tell Charles to send to me at ten to-morrow. I cannot see him yet. If he has debts, I will give him money to pay them, provided they are not gaming debts. He shall enter on his new duties, freed from all embarrassments.’”

While Curtis spoke, Charles sat at the table, with his face hidden in his hands. Curtis turned to Allen—“Well, Mr. Brooke, what do you say? Are you satisfied?”

“Mr. Clerrison is kinder than I hoped or ex-

pected," answered Allen. "When I consider how his hopes have been blighted, and his authority defied, I wonder that he can so soon be willing to do so much. Whether he has a right to insist on the separation of husband and wife, I cannot take upon me to decide. At any rate, he has a right to the obedience of his son, and to require some pledge for his future steadiness. Had he taken steps to annul the marriage immediately, I should not have been surprised; nor, to say the truth, should I have been sorry. My object, Mr. Curtis, is not to force concessions from Mr. Clerrison, nor to obtain any aggrandizement of situation for my sister; but simply to do my duty in putting an end to her present sufferings, and ascertaining her real position. Her situation is now dubious and miserable. She has a wife's duties and sorrows, without a wife's honours or privileges. Say for me to Mr. Clerrison, that I consider him to have acted with wonderful forbearance and generosity. That I thank him for his offer to Louisa, but beg leave to decline

it; not out of pride, but self-respect. My sister must receive no pecuniary favours from Mr. Clerrison, unless she be acknowledged as his son's wife. Until then, she is under her brother's care."

Curtis turned to Clerrison. "And what have you to say, Charles, to your father's offer?"

Charles slowly took his hands from his face, and revealed its death-like paleness, as he falteringly replied,

"That I—cannot—accept it."

Curtis uttered an exclamation of astonishment. Brooke sprang forward to strike Clerrison, but Curtis threw himself between them.

"A moment's patience! Charles, explain yourself instantly. I will not be trifled with. Do you mean to say you *will not* accept your father's offer?"

"Oh! no; but I cannot. I *dare* not."

An explanation was at last wrung forth. It appeared that about two years before, Charles being then eighteen, he had become in-

timate with a knot of dissipated young men. and contracted a passion for gaming. He had lost large sums, far beyond his ability to pay, though his allowance was a most liberal one. He was betrayed to his father by his principal creditor, who calculated shrewdly on Mr. Clerrison's love for his son, and the dread of public disgrace attaching to that son's name. But he had not calculated *all* the results of his daring game. Mr. Clerrison, violent when excited, was sternly inflexible when resolved. He held gaming and gamesters in utter abhorrence. He paid the debt, it was an enormous one, ordered the exulting sharper from his presence, sent for his son, told him what he had done, and demanded a list of his gaming debts. It was given; Charles received a check for the amount, and then heard his father take a solemn oath, *never to forgive, or consider him as a son, if ever he contracted another debt of like nature.* He shuddered, and resolved never to incur the penalty. For the next eighteen months his passion for Louisa, and the difficulties which

opposed it, occupied his attention, and supplied the excitement he had learned to crave at the gaming-table. But his love was merely the desire of a wilful child for a forbidden toy. When she became his wife, securely his own, her virtues, her beauty, even her innocent and devoted love, soon lost their influence over his weak and pampered nature. He renewed (accidentally at first) his intercourse with his former tempters. Gradually he was induced to play, soothing his conscience with the thought that he would not exceed his allowance, and therefore need not incur his father's displeasure. The end of such reasoning and such actions may be briefly told. Clerrison had gaming debts to the amount of three thousand dollars.

Curtis and Brooke looked at each other in consternation. "Oh! my poor Louisa," groaned the brother. Charles, conscience-stricken, ashamed, and despairing, sat silent.

"What is to be done?" asked Curtis, after a melancholy pause. "It is a large sum;—still,

Mr. Clerrison could easily afford to advance it."

"It is not that," muttered Charles. "It is not the *money*; it is *his oath*,—he will never break it. If he hears of this, I am a lost man."

Again the friends looked despondingly at each other. "What *is* to be done?" repeated Curtis. "I would gladly lay down the cash myself, but my means are slender. To be frank, my father spares me all he can, and I am just able to pay my way, and no more. Have you no moneyed friend you can call on, Clerrison?"

Clerrison shook his head.

"What *can* be done?" said Curtis, appealing to Brooke. Brooke was silent for a little time, and then he said, "So far as I can see, there is but one thing to be done: There is one person who can assist Charles."

"And who is that?" inquired Curtis, eagerly. Charles looked up in amazement.

"Myself. The money I have saved and

made within the last five years, with poor Louisa's earnings, is rather more than three thousand dollars. With that sum I meant to begin business at St. Louis. I was, as I told you, offered a partnership on very favourable terms. I am willing to give it up. It is evident that the scoundrels who have entangled Charles would keep silence for their own sakes, and allow him to remain their debtor, so long as they had hopes of payment from his father's purse. Those hopes failing, they would show him no mercy; every thing now depends on keeping the matter from Mr. Clerrison's knowledge. That can be done only by satisfying their claims at once, dishonest as they may be. *I will pay these debts. I can get my old clerkship again; and if three thousand dollars will save my sister's husband from a father's curse, I shall think the money well spent."*

His voice faltered. It was—it must have been, a bitter moment in which he sacrificed his honest hope of independence; but his purpose wavered not. Curtis wrung his hands in

silent sympathy. Charles hid his face again, and burst into tears.

“Here is the money,” continued Brooke, taking out his pocket-book; “settle these disgraceful debts to-night, if you can, Charles. Let Mr. Curtis carry your acknowledgments and acceptance to your father to-morrow, and then come and bid your wife farewell. This indulgence he will not deny you, and she has a right to it.”

“I am sure he will not,” said Curtis; “and I am sure, too, that if Charles behaves well, his father will abridge the time of probation.”

“I will go with you to-night, Brooke,” exclaimed Charles.

“No; you do not enter my house without your father’s permission; besides, Louisa is not able to receive you. When I left you at six o’clock, I went home, and found her so ill that I sent for a physician. He gave her an opiate, and ordered her to be kept perfectly quiet. I left her asleep, and she must not be disturbed.”

Cutting short the incoherent thanks and promises of Charles, Curtis and Brooke went away together. They had not been gone five minutes before Selby made his appearance. He listened to Charles' rapturous account of his brother-in-law's generosity, echoing his praises, applauding Charles' resolutions of reform, and expatiating on the delights of domestic life. Then he rang for Champagne, and proposed a bumper to Allen's health. Charles drank; the glasses were refilled, and he drank again. Selby turned the conversation on Charles' debts, and artfully brought to mind that he had an unsettled claim. It was paid. More wine was pressed on Charles, but he proposed to go in search of his creditors. Harrington was one of them. Selby expected him every moment; they would all go together. Meanwhile, another glass of wine; and, just for pastime, they would take a hit at backgammon, till Harrington came.

He came—they loitered—the victim was plied with wine—Selby and Harrington began

to bet with each other—Charles was allowed to be a looker-on until his interest became excited. Selby produced the money Charles had paid him. It was suggested that he might win it back—that he might win enough to pay his debts and restore Allen's money —

Will it be believed?—No; those who do not know the sorcery of the gaming-table never *can* believe, that at five in the morning, *Charles Clerrison had lost the last dollar of Brooke's three thousand.*

He paid over the money with seeming indifference, and, when Harrington departed, said in a quiet tone, to Selby, "With your leave, Selby, I'll just throw myself on the sofa, and take a nap."

Selby was, as usual, profuse in his offers of accommodation, pressing Charles to occupy his bed; but Charles rather sternly intimated that he chose to lie on the sofa, and wished to be left alone.

When Selby had withdrawn, Charles threw off his assumed calmness, and, groaning in

agony, walked distractedly about the parlour. "For this," he said, "did Allen beggar himself—for this did my father forgive me—for this did Louisa love and trust me. Oh! villains; but no; it is I;—madman! fool! beast that I am. Oh! Louisa, what have I done? Where shall I hide my dishonoured head? The very refuse of the world will spurn me. Allen Brooke, how can I meet you? I cannot—I cannot—any thing rather than that."

Selby's pistol-case lay on a side-table. It was open, and the weapons caught Charles' eye. "Ha! well thought of." He took up one of the pistols; it was loaded. "Allen, you shall not look reproach upon me till I am careless of your looks. Louisa!" He staggered to the chimney, and gazed at himself in the mirror which hung over it. "I look like a bridegroom, don't I? A merry bridegroom—and a blessed bridal I have made for you, Louisa. Poor girl, poor girl. Well, she will forgive me; they will all forgive me then."

He put the pistol to his head, fired, and fell, mortally wounded.

* * * * *

Those who pass by the — Lunatic Hospital, often overhear the wailing screams of a female maniac, to whose imagination is ever present the bloody and disfigured body of her self-murdered husband. That maniac is Louisa Brooke.

CHANGES OF SCENE.

~~~~~  
Swift o'er Memory's magic glass,  
Now the changing shadows pass.—M. S. POEM.  
~~~~~

POOR Mrs. Brown's horror and distress at the terrible catastrophe which had taken place in her house, threw her into a nervous fever, and when she recovered, she declared that she would never let the best rooms to a single gentleman again. The furniture, (some articles of which bore sanguinary tokens of Clerrison's fearful death,) was changed, and as my beauty began to fade, and I was not valuable enough to be sold, I was given to one of the children, who soon wearied of playing with me, and the chamber-maid placed me on the mantelpiece in one of the third story rooms.

Many strange pages in the book of human life were opened to me there. - The first occu-

pants of the chamber were a married couple. The wife was a little, timid, broken-spirited creature ; the husband was the best of husbands in company, and a sullen tyrant in private. To them succeeded a student of medicine, whose poor parents had half-starved themselves, that he might attend the lectures, and keep up the appearance of a gentleman. He went on very soberly for a short time, then plunged into dissipation, neglected his studies, expended in six weeks the sum that should have supported him for six months, and finally disappeared, as Mrs. Brown said, "between two days," leaving an empty trunk and half a dozen ill-used medical books in payment for his board.

Then came a young wife, whose husband was at sea. They were in narrow circumstances, and she prudently resolved not to incur the expenses of housekeeping in her husband's absence. So she and her pretty baby came to board with Mrs. Brown. She often sang it to sleep, and among her simple lays the following seemed her favourite :—

All day thy far wanderings in thought to pursue,
All night my lone pillow with tears to bedew,
 To welcome, for thy sake, the lowliest lot ;
To gaze on our babe, thy resemblance to see,
And love him the better for looking like thee,
 If this be forgetting thee, thou art forgot.

To toil on contented, though lone and obscure,
And, assur'd of thy love, to forget we are poor,
 In the wealth of delight from that certainty caught ;
Though a year since our parting has lingered away,
To feel it, as though thou hadst left me to-day —
 If *this* be forgetting thee, thou art forgot.

Mrs. Ellis was a Christian mother, and she began early to train up her child in the way it should go. Next to her Bible, Abbott's Mother at Home was her chief study. She seldom left her chamber except at meal times, and when her child was laid to sleep on his little pillow, how fervent were her prayers, as she knelt beside him, for his father's safety—not from *danger* only, but from *sin*. He came at last, and never did a happier pair offer thanks for perils passed and mercies granted, than knelt beside each other then ; the husband's manly voice faltering with emotion, and the sweet face of his wife deulged with joyful tears.

“Ruthless Time, who waits for no man,” wended on at his accustomed pace; and seven years had gone over me in that third story room, when Mrs. Brown broke up housekeeping. Her eldest son was established in business, her younger was apprenticed to his brother, and both her daughters well married. The affectionate children paid back, with hearty good will, the debt of love and care they owed their mother; and, in compliance with their repeated entreaties, she agreed to give up business, and reside with each of them in turn. Her furniture was accordingly disposed of, and during the process of arrangement for sale, I was gathered up with certain other antiquated trifles, and thrown into a large old trunk, which had stood, time out of mind, in the back garret. Here I found myself in company with rolls of patches, bundles of dried herbs, files of old newspapers, the London Magazine for 1770, three old song books, a mutilated English Reader, some torn spelling books, sundry fragments of slates, and several smeared copy-

books. To these were now added an old filigree basket, a crushed pasteboard flower-stand, a pair of tarnished card-racks, a few soiled pencil drawings, and myself. The trunk was put into a lot with three crazy chairs and a very infirm bedstead, bought by a broker and dealer in second-hand furniture, and by him placed in his shop.

“The world is a comedy to those who think, a tragedy to those who feel.” This saying might well be applied to Mr. Farrell’s shop. What an incongruous medley did it contain! What tales of household wreck, of sorrow, poverty, pain, and death did it suggest. Here stood a scrap-table, the toy, perhaps, of happy leisure; its making, no doubt, had cost weeks of time and dollars of expense; there lay a string of rusty keys. Here was a carved mahogany bureau, black with age; there, an oil-painting fresh from the easel. Here, a chaff bed, stained and torn; there, a pair of elegant glass shades. Here, a pine table worth fifty cents; there, a sideboard worth four times as

many dollars. On those hooks hung a costly rifle; in this case glittered a lady's watch.

The trunk in which I lay was placed near the door, and remained there unnoticed for two or three days, until one of Mrs. Farrell's children, who occasionally threaded the labyrinths of the shop, chose to open it. She was busily examining its contents, when the pleasing occupation was suspended by the slight tap of a parasol applied to the back of the searcher, while a voice of surpassing sweetness inquired, "My dear, does Mrs. Farrell live here?"

The child scrambled up, and stood gazing in awkward, open-mouthed wonder at the speaker, who smilingly repeated her inquiry. The child turned round and rushed into the interior of the establishment, shouting as she ran, "Mother! mother! here's a woman wants to know if you live here."

The lady was young and beautiful, tall, of noble figure and dignified carriage. Her dress was a gray silk, with a plain lace collar, and the dark curls which clustered round her bloom-

ing face were shaded by a straw bonnet, tied down with white satin riband. Her eyes wandered round the shop, and fell at last on the open trunk. She stooped, and extended her hand to the magazine; suddenly she paused, lifted me up, and surveyed me attentively. Mrs. Farrell was at her side, with the staring child clinging to her gown, and had twice repeated her question of, "What did you please to want, ma'am?" before the lady was conscious of her presence.

"I beg your pardon, madam," she said, starting from her reverie. "Pray is this screen for sale?"

"Mrs. Farrell replied that it was. The lady took out her purse, paid the trifling sum demanded for me, and then said, "May I ask, madam, if you know where it came from?"

Mrs. Farrell replied, that her husband had bought it with a lot of old things, of a Mrs. Brown, who kept a boarding-house in Spruce Street.

"I was sure of of it," said the lady, a bright

smile dimpling round her mouth; "I was sure it was my old acquaintance." She wrapped me carefully in her handkerchief, and referring to a paper she held in her hand, asked if Mrs. Farrell could tell her where to find Mrs. Nancy Ryan.

"She has a room here, ma'am; they moved last week;—please to walk this way—up them stairs, ma'am; turn to the right, and knock at the first door; take care, ma'm, that paint's wet." The lady thanked her courteously, and groped her way up the dark and crooked stairs.

"Come in," was the invitation accorded to her gentle tap. The lady opened the door, and involuntarily shrunk back from the close and offensive atmosphere that filled the room. The day was warm, yet the window was shut, and a haggard woman, the sole occupant of the room, her eyes glazed, and cheeks flushed with fever, lay panting for breath under a huge heap of bed-clothes.

The lady sprang to the window, threw it up

as high as it would go, turned to the bed, and flung back part of the heavy covering; then, addressing the invalid, she said, "I had some difficulty in finding you, Mrs. Ryan, or I should have been here before. You are quite sick."

"Oh! yes, honey. I am a great deal worse since morning."

The lady drew off her glove, applied her fingers to the woman's pulse, and said, "You want bleeding immediately, Mrs. Ryan. You have no objection?"

"Oh! no, honey, if you'll be by me."

The lady called Mrs. Farrell, and requested her to let one of her children go for a bleeder. Mrs. Farrell readily assented, and the lady, encouraged by her civility, ventured to petition for a pail of hot water. It was brought, and Mrs. Farrell offered her farther assistance, for which she was warmly thanked by the lady. Between them, the sick woman was lifted up, and placed in an arm-chair which Mrs. Farrell kindly brought from the shop.

"Oh! how much good it does me," said

Mrs. Ryan, when her feet had been for a few minutes in the hot water. "I feel better already." "You will feel better still," said the lady, "when I have bathed your face and hands, and combed your hair, and put on your cap snugly; and while I do that, perhaps, Mrs. Farrell, you would be so kind as to make up Mrs. Ryan's bed with clean sheets, and she will feel so comfortable." Mrs. Farrell, having screamed to "Sally" to "mind the door," began with alacrity to make the bed; but Mrs. Ryan had no clean sheets. Stimulated, however, by the presence and example of the fair stranger, Mrs. Farrell offered to lend a pair of sheets and a pillow-case. Mean time, the lady took out of her little basket an apron, which she tied on, turned up her sleeves, and tenderly bathed the fevered face and hands of the patient, combed out her tangled hair, replaced her cap, dried her feet, and, assisted by Mrs. Farrell, had her settled in her clean, cool, comfortably made bed, before the bleeder arrived. The abstraction of blood seemed to give Mrs.

Ryan's laboured breathing immediate relief; the lady then opened her basket again, took out some medicine, which she mixed and administered; and having, with quiet dexterity, set the littered room in something like order, she sat down by the bed-side, and recommended her patient to try to sleep.

"I can't sleep, honey. I'd rather look at you. It does me good to see you once more," replied Mrs. Ryan.

The lady smiled. "I must leave you soon, Mrs. Ryan, but I shall come again to-morrow morning; you want nothing at present but sleep. Tell your husband to give you a little warm tea now and then, nothing else till I see you. You would like me to read a little to you, before I go?"

"Oh! yes, honey; bless you, that I should."

The lady reached an old Bible that lay on the table, read a chapter, and then, kneeling beside the bed, she prayed in simple, yet energetic language, while tears, sweet, soothing tears, flowed down the sick woman's cheeks.

Having concluded her pious office, the lady bade her patient a kind farewell, and departed: stopping, as she passed through the shop, to repeat her thanks for Mrs. Farrell's assistance; Mrs. Farrell volunteering a promise "to step up as often as she could, and see after the poor soul a little." People are often incited to do kind actions by seeing it supposed that they are willing to do them.

My new owner paid several visits of a similar description, distributing money, advice, and sympathy, as they were needed; and the sun was setting when she ascended the steps of an elegant mansion in Chesnut street.

THE MISSIONARY'S BRIDE.

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Shall we, whose souls are lighted  
With wisdom from on high ;  
Shall we to men benighted  
The lamp of life deny ?—HEBER.  
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“ My love,” exclaimed a young gentleman, as he advanced to meet the lady ; “ my own Joanna, where *have* you been ?”

“ Dear Edmund, have I kept you waiting ? I thought I should have been at home two hours ago, but Mrs. Ryan had moved, and I had some difficulty in finding her. And I had other calls to make, which could not be deferred without infringing on our duties for to-morrow. But you look tired, and sad too, my Edmund ?” she continued, and, throwing me on the table, she took her companion’s hand, and looked anxiously in his face. He had seated himself

again, and as she stood beside him, he drew her to him, and leaned his head on her arm. "I am tired, and a little sad too. I have had a toilsome walk, and a very painful visit; but I shall be better now."

"I will ask cousin Susan to order tea up immediately," said the lady, gently withdrawing from his embrace. "Tea will revive you, I know. I will take off my bonnet, and come back to you in a moment;" and she turned to leave the room.

"Joanna," said the gentleman.

"Well?" replied the lady, pausing, with her hand on the knob of the door.

"Dearest," resumed the gentleman, and he hesitated, as if he spoke reluctantly; "what is your opinion *now* about Watson's affair?"

"Exactly what it was yesterday."

"Then you will not do any thing?"

"What you wished *is* done."

"Done! when?"

"This afternoon, before I went to Mrs. Ryan's."

“My dear, kind wife! But you have done this against your own judgment.”

“You know our agreement, Edmund, that when our opinions differed, and reasons appeared nearly equal on both sides, *you* should have the casting vote. I had rather trust your judgment than my own. You know, aunt Lorimer used to say you had the best balanced mind in the world.”

“I thank you *very* much, my dear girl. You have acted in direct opposition to your own will. I ——”

“What’s the use,” interrupted Joanna, playfully, still resting one hand on the door-knob, while she extended the other gracefully towards her husband; “what’s the use of having that important possession, *a will of one’s own*, if we cannot give it up to oblige those we love?”

So saying, she opened the door and tripped away.

This little scene took place in the front parlour. A gentleman who sat reading in the

adjoining room had been unnoticed by the young pair, being concealed from view by the half-closed folding door; he now came forward, laughing.

“How in the world, Field,” said he, “did you contrive to convert our vixen cousin into such a gentle wife?”

“She never was a *vixen*, I think,” answered Edmund, smiling, for he understood the good-humoured raillery of the speaker; “but she was converted into a gentle Christian before she became my wife; and the best of wives she is,” he continued, as the subject of his eulogy re-entered.

“Excepting me, Mr. Field,” said a lady who followed Joanna into the parlour.

“*Your* claims to that title are so well established that we think it needless to mention them,” was the smiling reply, as the happy group surrounded the tea-table.

When “the lady-like duties of the tea-table” were ended, and the little party seated again in the front parlour, Joanna said, “Did any of

you ever see this before?" and she held me up to view. Mr. Field had forgotten me, but Mrs. Andrews, after a minute inspection, exclaimed, "I do believe, Joanna, that this is the screen that stood on the mantelpiece in the parlour, when grandmamma and I boarded at Mrs. Brown's."

"It is; there are my initials, which you reproved me for scratching on the handle. I found it to-day in a second-hand furniture shop."

"A very valuable relic, indeed," said Mr. Andrews, turning me round, and eyeing me in rather a disrespectful manner, "and cost you a goodly sum, no doubt."

"More than you would think it worth, of course," replied Joanna, good-humouredly; "but I would willingly have paid twice as much for a token which reminds me so pleasantly of 'lang syne.'"

"Dear grandmamma!" said Mrs. Andrews, as she musingly surveyed my faded surface.

"Yes," said Joanna, "don't you remember,

Susan, exactly how she looked as she used to sit in her easy chair, using this screen to defend her eyes from the glare of the coal fire? I have often watched her as she sat in the large crimson-cushioned chair, wrapped in the rich-looking dark shawl she was so fond of, with her silver hair parted on her serene fore-head, under her cap of snow-white lace; her hand, still fair and delicate, holding up this screen; and sometimes little Ellen Morris on the footstool at her feet, in her white frock, with her long flaxen curls hanging over her neck, her arm on aunt Lorimer's knee, and her round, rosy face lifted up so smilingly—and the fire casting a ruddy glow upon the group. I have longed to be a painter, then.”

“Quite a poetical description. You paint in words, Joanna,” observed Mr. Andrews.

“I can't help it, cousin,” said Joanna, apologetically. “I only describe things as I see them.”

“Your eyes must be Claude Lorraine glasses then; but you tell me

'Nothing is lost upon him who sees
With an eye that feeling gave;
To him there's a story in every breeze,
And a picture in every wave,'"

quoted Mr. Andrews.

"True, cousin, true," replied Joanna, earnestly, "and though you quote those charming lines in jest, I feel them in earnest. Often do I thank God for giving me those perceptions, which enable me, in the language of one who must have partaken the blessing, 'to look at a blank wall, and fancy I gaze on Paradise.' You pity the deaf and dumb; how much more are they to be pitied whose mental visions can form no picture when it looks upon the elements of beauty; whose mental hearing is deaf to poetry, which is the music of thought."

Mr. Andrews looked admiringly at the beautiful creature before him, as her animated features expressed what she felt.

"What a being to bury in a western wilderness! Field, can you really intend that all these charms and talents are to be dimmed in

the smoke of an Indian wigwam, for the remainder of your natural lives?"

She has chosen," said Edmund, calmly.

"Cousin," resumed Joanna, blushing deeply, while tears started into her eyes—"do not talk so. I know your compliments, as well as your teazings, are more than half ironical; still they make me uncomfortable. If I possessed all the qualities you are pleased to ascribe to me, from whom did I receive, and to whom should I devote them? I am aware that the duties I shall hereafter undertake, and the influence I may be called on to exert, must be of a kind in which talents and accomplishments (as those words are generally understood) will not be needed. But I desire to consecrate all I am, and all I may be, to my Saviour's service. And so long as I can cultivate refinement of thought and manner, without neglecting 'the weightier matters of the law,' so long will I continue to bring my little offering of 'anise, and mint, and cummin.' I may be wrong," she continued, the poetry of her nature flashing

forth in spite of herself, "but those who banish from their minds and manners when they enter the service of God, all the graces they so sedulously cultivated for the world, appear to me like those who keep back the choice of the flock, and offer the blind, the halt, and the maimed on the altar of the Most High. Excuse me if I have spoken too strongly."

There was a short silence, for Mr. Andrews (who, though a good and intelligent man, was incapable of estimating the lofty enthusiasm of Joanna) felt somewhat embarrassed. Mrs. Andrews, with her usual good-natured tact, broke the awkward pause by recurring to me; and Joanna gave the little history of my rescue.

"And what do you mean to do with your treasure?"

"Keep it, Susan. I shall keep it always. To me it brings back many sweet memories. I shall prize it for her sake who is now a saint in heaven. How many lessons of holy wisdom I received from aunt Lorimer in that parlour at Mrs. Brown's! How many lessons

of practical usefulness I got from you, dear Susan !”

“They were unconsciously given, I am sure,” observed the modest Susan.

“And not always willingly received, for I was a wayward girl in those days ; however, they bore their fruit in due season. There, too, I first saw you, Edmund ; and there—” she stopped, and looked affectionately at her husband.

“And there you first fell in love !” said Mr Andrews.

“No, indeed, that was not until a long time after,” replied Joanna, innocently. “What I was going to say, was, that there I received my first impressions of the importance of religion. Edmund went to college a few months after we first met, and I saw nothing of him for five years. There was very little love between us then. I rather feared him, for he told me of my faults more plainly than I had ever been told before.”

“And you bore the telling well, dear Joanna,” said Edmund.

“And so I won my Genevieve,
My bright and beauteous bride’—

an original style of wooing, truly,” said Mr. Andrews.

“It came to good speed, nevertheless,” retorted Edmund.

LETTER FROM JOANNA TO A FRIEND.

Philadelphia, May 16, 18—.

MY DEAR MARIANNE:—Your letter, filled with wonders and queries, reached me only yesterday. The change of our proposed route accounts for your not having received any letters from me since that in which I announced my intended marriage.

I have been married three months. Edmund and I are now the guests of my cousin Susan. As Edmund cannot enter the ministry until next spring, we shall spend the intervening time in Philadelphia, preparing ourselves, as

far as we are able, for the sacred duties we are about to undertake.

You are aware, my dear friend, that from Edmund's earliest youth, it has been his wish and prayer that he might serve God as a missionary. I united my fate with his, understanding and consenting, that his life was to be devoted to missionary labours. I did not take this step hastily or unadvisedly. Perhaps, had I been left to my own choice, I might have preferred a settlement in a place where his highly cultivated mind and elegant manners might be appreciated; but when I accepted his hand, I felt that even *without a higher* motive, his affection would repay me for all I should resign to become his companion in the wilderness. At first he thought of going to Asia; but on balancing the reasons for and against this choice, we arrived at the conclusion that the scale of duty preponderated in favour of our own country, and that our opportunities of doing good might (humanly speaking) be greater and of longer duration.

The Indians of America, those poor remains of savage greatness, have always appeared to my mind a deeply wronged people. Stripped of their wild dignity, degraded from their savage chivalry, robbed of their birth-right, denied as they touchingly say, even "a resting place for the bones of their fathers," tainted with the vices, while refused the privileges of civilization, they are indeed—

"What others' crimes and injuries have made them."

The white man drove them from their ancestral forests. The right of possession I am not prepared to dispute; I cannot decide upon the law of nations; but the law of Christian love is plain. "*To loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke.*" We cannot give back their wide domains, but we can point their way to a rich inheritance beyond the everlasting hills. We cannot deliver him that has been spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor; but we can tell of One who

came to break from the soul the yoke of sin—we can spread before them ‘the unsearchable riches of Christ.’ Surely, if we desire a blessing to rest upon our dear, dear country, we should strive for the salvation of the scattered remnants of that race which first welcomed the white men to its shores. My heart sickens when I think of the melancholy war that now desolates our southern frontier, and has cost the blood of so many of our best and bravest. Oh! that the cross had been our standard, and the ministers of Christ our leaders, in the *first* warfare against our forest foes.

These considerations of our duty to others inclined us to decide for the far west. For ourselves, there was no positive duty to keep us at home. Edmund’s only sister is happily married, and his mother resides with her; his protection, therefore, is not needed for them. He has no other relatives. For myself, my father’s second marriage with a lady well calculated to make his domestic life happy, has enabled him to dispense with my presence, and his new

views of duty induce him cheerfully to forward mine. My excellent grand-aunt Lorimer is dead, and my orphan cousin Susan is a happy wife and mother. I have, then, no claims of affection which can interfere with those of my beloved husband, and no claims of duty which interfere with my earnest desire to assist in carrying the message of salvation to the heathen of the far west.

I at first determined to defer my marriage until after Edmund's ordination, but after consulting my friends, it was thought better that our union should take place immediately, and we have agreed to devote the present year, as much as possible, to preparations for our future duties. Edmund gives all the time he can spare to the study of medicine; and I, under his instructions, shall hope to be something of a physician myself. My dear mother's long illness, you remember, made me a skilful nurse; and I am taking a course of *kitchen lectures*, that I may be able to provide somewhat for the

comfort of my dear husband when we are settled in our log cabin.

Our privations will doubtless be great, and our trials may be greater, but we are not poor (for my dear father has been very liberal, and "money is power" even in the wilderness,) we have youth, health, energy, mutual affection, and mutual desire to labour in the service of our Heavenly Master. We do not expect "a Paradise to open in the wild;" but thus endowed and thus employed, we may humbly hope for the blessing of God upon our labours, and a reasonable portion of domestic happiness at our fire-side.

I am called away. You shall hear from me again very soon; mean time, I am, dear Marianne,

Affectionately yours,

JOANNA FIELD.

THE END.



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